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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the twelve issues of "Child Support Report" newsletter published during 1997. Monthly issues typically explore problems related to child support enforcement, report on federal and state government child support enforcement initiatives, and summarize research related to child support. Editorials and information on events and conferences of interest and funding opportunities are featured regularly. Major topics during 1997 included: (1) child support payments and child outcomes, noncustodial parents' reasons for failure to pay child support, unintended pregnancies (January); (2) using the Internet to apply for child support, national strategies to prevent teen pregnancy, welfare reform, program collaboration (February); (3) child support/Head Start collaboration, responsible fathering, welfare reform, reciprocity with foreign nations (March); (4) Big 8 Initiative, health insurance, training needs assessments results, Illinois child support, Child Support Recovery Act (April); (5) incarcerated mothers, welfare reform, male/female relationships, military personnel (May); (6) public/private agency collaboration, predictors of child support payments, welfare reform (June); (7) payment processing systems, health care access, military children, federal statistics web site, (July); (8) noncustodial parents, outreach to employers, Uniform Interstate Family Support Act, hotlines for new and expectant mothers (August); (9) community oriented law enforcement, federal/state partnerships, verifying military income (September); (10) new hire and welfare reform deadlines, Ireland and Canada child support laws (October); (11) job training initiatives, child support innovations, Census Bureau report (November); and (12) locating noncustodial parents, welfare reform, child support/domestic violence partnerships, low-income fathers, health insurance (December). (KB)

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement Vol. XIX, No. 1, January 1997

Child Support Payments Positively Affect Children's Outcomes

A variety of researchers have, in the recent past, reported findings that child support income is more beneficial to children than other sources of family income.

The receipt of child support has been linked positively to more years in school, greater attainment of educational goals, increased grade point average, and reductions in behavioral problems.

Now comes Laura M. Argys et al., "Contributions of Absent Fathers to Child Well-Being: The Impact of Child Support Dollars and Father-Child Contact" (1996) to lend further support to the argument that child support payments benefit families beyond increasing income.

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Argys and her co-authors, H. Elizabeth Peters, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, and Judith R. Smith address three questions.

First, other than its role in increasing income, does the receipt of child support have beneficial effects for children with noncustodial fathers?

Second, do the effects of child support differ when awards and payments are made cooperatively as opposed to noncooperatively (court ordered)?

Third, how do the government's family policies affect the probability of child support awards and payments and, in particular, the probability of cooperative awards and payments?

In regressions that control for family income and other socioeconomic family background characteristics, the study finds that the receipt of child support has positive effects on some measures of children's cognitive and behavioral outcomes.

While effects vary by type of outcome, race, and reasons for fathers' absence, this study finds evidence, for example, that receipt of child support has a positive impact on children's test scores over and above its contribution to total family income.

The study also finds that cooperative child support awards and payments appear to be more beneficial than court ordered child support.

Turning to policy variables, the study finds that child support guidelines promote awards that are cooperative, while increases in the paternity establishment rate increase court ordered (i.e., noncooperative) awards.

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Previous research tended to ignore the distinction between cooperative and noncooperative awards. Results of this study show it to be important in assessing child support's affect on child well-being.

If you would like further information about this research, or a copy of "Contributions of Absent Fathers to Child Well-Being," contact Laura M. Argys directly at (303) 556-3949; fax (303) 556-3547; Internet: largys@castle.cudenver.edu□

Laura M. Argys, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics, University of Colorado, Denver; H. Elizabeth Peters, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Consumer Economics and Housing, Cornell University; Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Ph.D., is Virginia and Leonard Marx Professor of Child Development and Education, Teachers College, Columbia University; Judith R. Smith, Ph.D., is Associate Professor at Fordham University, Graduate School of Social Services, and Research Scientist, Center for Young Children and Families, Teachers College, Columbia University.

FYI Census Bureau Report: News You Can Use

The Commerce Department's Census Bureau has released a new report, "Marital Status and Living Arrangements of Americans." A snapshot of American society, it shows an increasing diversity of household types and is useful for child support enforcement staff as an aid to understanding within a broad perspective the living arrangements of many CSE families.

The report, using data from the March, 1995, Current Population Survey, reveals that:

- Nearly 3 out of 10 (18.9 million, 27 percent) of children under 18 live with only one parent;
- Of these 18.9 million children, 16.47 million live with a mother only, and 2.46 million live with a father only;
- There are 3.7 million unmarried-couple households;
- Approximately 4 million children live in the home of their grandparents; and
- One-third, or 13.6 million, of persons age 25 to 34 have never been married.

The report can be found on the Internet at http://www.census.gov/ftp/pub/prod/www/titles.html

Or call the Census Bureau's Public Information Office at (301) 457-3030.□

Fathers Say Why They Don't Pay

By David Arnaudo

Sumati Dubey, a researcher at the University of Illinois Chicago campus has recently published the results of a study on reasons given by noncustodial parents for failure to pay child support. The study, conducted in six Illinois counties, consisted of 150 questionnaires returned by noncustodial fathers who owed child support. These fathers appeared before the court between February and June of 1994 to respond to a summons of the State's Attorney General's Office for nonpayment. The reasons they gave for not paying support:

• **No money to pay**	**38 percent**
• **Not allowed to visit**	**23 percent**
• **No control of spending**	**14 percent**
• **Did not want child**	**13 percent**
• **Not the father**	**12 percent**

For fathers in this group who were never married, unemployment was the major reason given for nonpayment of support. For fathers who were employed but still did not pay, lack of visitation was the major reason.

These findings underscore the importance of two provisions in the new Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform). Section 365 of the Act authorizes states to have a work requirement program for unemployed fathers, while section 469B authorizes state programs to assist noncustodial parents who have problems gaining access to their children.

If you would like more information, contact OCSE's David Arnaudo at (202) 401-5364.□

David Arnaudo is Senior Technical Advisor in OCSE's Division of Policy and Planning.

This article is a summary of Sumati Dubey's "A Study of Reasons for Nonpayment of Child Support by Noncustodial Parents," which appeared in the Spring, 1996, Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare.

OCSE Funds State/ Tribal Agreements

OCSE has approved the funding of four state/tribal cooperative agreements under section 1115 of the Social Security Act. The purpose: to demonstrate new approaches between states and tribal entities aimed at improving the delivery of child support services on tribal lands. The approved applicants are North Dakota, Oklahoma, Washington, and Wisconsin.

North Dakota Department of Human Services: North Dakota will contract with the Northern Plains Tribal Judicial Training Institute at the University of North Dakota to develop draft tribal codes, designed to meet IV-D requirements for each of the four reservations in North Dakota. Each of the tribal councils and tribal judiciaries will participate in the project.

Oklahoma Department of Human Services: Oklahoma will establish a training program in conjunction with the Chickasaw Nation for training State IV-D personnel concerning Native American culture and values. The State and the Chickasaw Nation will develop a financial and cooperative agreement for the provision of IV-D services on tribal lands, and a working relationship will be developed between the tribe's CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) court and the State courts for handling tribal cases.

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services: Washington State's project will develop a model process for working with tribal courts, including development of a tribal court bench book on child support and tribal laws. The State will work with the Northwest Tribal Court Judge's Association, whose membership comes from 43 tribal courts in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Alaska, and sections of Montana.

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development: Wisconsin will develop a cooperative agreement with the Menominee Tribe for the operation of a IV-D program on reservation lands. The Menominee Tribe will develop internal laws and procedures required to implement a child support enforcement program in conjunction with the development of the cooperative agreement.□

Additional Grants Approved Under 1115 Authority

OCSE has also approved, under the same 1115 authority, the funding of two Government Performance and Results Act cooperative agreements to demonstrate performance measurement. The approved applicants are Illinois and Washington State.

Illinois Division of Child Support Enforcement: Illinois' goal is to improve performance in counties with State's Attorneys through performance based contracting by measuring the work of the State's Attorneys against indicators traced by activity codes entered into their computer systems. The purpose is to determine if performance based contracts with child support legal representatives drives increased performance by contractors and whether such contracts ultimately save money.

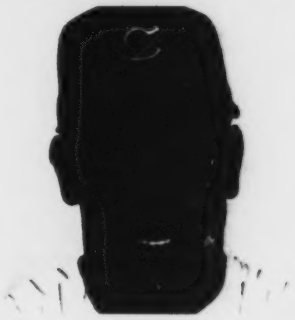
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services: Washington State will examine the success of assigning hard-to-collect cases to a specialized unit within its child support agency. The project will measure the unit's performance using agreed-upon federal performance indicators to assess cases assigned to the special unit compared with a control group of cases.

A supplemental 1115 grant also has been awarded to **Colorado** to deepen and enhance two of the interventions within the Colorado model office grant (see October '95 *CSR*). The improved interview intervention, which includes joint IV-A/IV-D intake, will now include a study of the good cause exemption and noncooperation. The community outreach intervention, which is conducted under the Paternity Outreach Project, will be expanded to study services, such as mediation and peer support, to unmarried parents as a means of increasing paternity establishment.

For further information about projects on this page, contact Craig Hathaway at (202) 401-5367 for the tribal cooperative agreements; Tom Killmurray at (202) 401-4677 for Illinois Performance Measures; Joyce Pitts at (202) 401-5374 for Washington Performance Measures; and Gaile Maller at (202) 401-5368 for the Colorado Model Office Project.□

Chicago Cubs Players Are Star Fathers

Ryne Sandberg



Sammy Sosa

Star Chicago Cubs players are traveling on Illinois' airways to ask every father to be an MVP (most valuable player) to his children. Cubs Ryne Sandberg and Sammy Sosa appear with their children in public service announcements (PSAs) produced by the Illinois Department of Public Aid's Division of Child Support Enforcement. Their message: "Fatherhood can be child's play."

Fatherhood
can be child's play.

Featured in separate 60 second PSAs, Sandberg spreads the word about fatherhood in English, while Sosa's message is in Spanish. Both say that being a good father is like being a good baseball player:

- You are part of a team;
- You have to show up for every game; and
- You can score big if your heart is in it.

Every father, they say, who provides love, time, and financial and emotional support to his children is an MVP to his family.

"We want to encourage fathers—whether married, divorced, or single—to spend more time with their children. And we want all children," says Dianna Durham-McLoud, Administrator of Illinois' Child Support Enforcement Program, "to see their fathers as star players who will guide them to strong, healthy futures."

Illinois' staff were inspired by Michigan's successful fatherhood campaign with the Detroit Lions football team (see February '96 *CSR*). If you would like further information, call Karen Newton-Matza at (312) 793-8223 or Lois Rakov at (312) 793-4568.□

New Hire Conference

Nearly 250 participants gathered on December 9 and 10 in Washington, DC for a national conference on "New Hire Reporting at the State and National Levels: Making it Work." Forty-eight states and jurisdictions sent representatives from their child support enforcement agencies, state employment security administrations, tax and revenue departments, and other agencies to discuss the required directories of new hire information, which make up a critical part of the child support provisions of welfare reform legislation.

The conference, formatted as an information exchange between states that already have new hire reporting and those that don't, was designed to assist all states in building an effective new hire directory by the October 1, 1997, deadline.

Proceedings from the meeting will be available in mid-January. For a copy call Karen Bartlett at (202) 401-4630, or fax your request to her at (202) 401-5559. Karen can also be reached on Internet at kbartlett@acf.dhhs.gov.□

Dallas Forum Draws A Crowd

By Mae F. Saulter and Wendy Russell

OCSE's third and last New Responsibilities Forum on the welfare reform legislation, held in Dallas, Texas, November 18-20, 1996, attracted more than 600 state, local, and federal participants. In addition, an estimated 300 participants took part in the Forum through a nationwide live satellite broadcast.

In Dallas, participants explored the theme, "Strengthening Families Through Independence, Work, Responsibility, and Support," during two plenary sessions and 43 workshops. Leon R. McCowan, West Central Regional Hub Director, welcomed participants and provided an overview of activities. Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families Olivia A. Golden presented the keynote address to an audience that included DHHS Region VI Regional Director Patricia Montoya; OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross; Child Care Bureau Deputy Associate Commissioner Frank Fuentes, Jr.; and ACF's Office of Regional Operations Director Diann Dawson.

"Too many children and too many families are still not getting the support they deserve." .....*David Gray Ross*

In the first plenary session, Judge Ross, with support from Fuentes, Dawson, and OCSE's Anne Donovan, led the audience in an animated discussion of major welfare reform issues and initiatives. Noting that the new legislation "strengthens our hand considerably," Judge Ross reminded participants of the great amount of work still to be done. "Too many children and too many families," he said, "are still not getting the support they deserve. Yet," he concluded, "we can still feel good about what we have done even as we say that we have to do better."

A second plenary session featured Madlyn B. Bagneris, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Social Services; George M. Miller, Director of the Oklahoma Department of Social Services; Jim Hennessey, Director of the Iowa Bureau of Collections; and Ron Mincy, Director of the Ford Foundation's Fatherhood Initiative.

OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross

Ms. Bagneris spoke about Louisiana's Family Independence Project, which is based on a temporary assistance program focusing on time-limited benefits, immunizations, school attendance, parenting skills, living arrangements, and penalties for rejecting full-time work.

Mr. Miller reviewed the creation of several committees in Oklahoma to explore issues affected by welfare reform. Major changes to the CSE program in Oklahoma include stronger regulations, the loss of incentives, and the loss of the $50 disregard.

Mr. Hennessey noted that from 1992 to 1995, Iowa's CSE program adopted many of the changes in the welfare reform bill. Important issues in Iowa are the sanction of licenses for nonpayment of child support, quality bank matches, enforced income withholding time-frames, real and personal property links, and creation of a central lien index.

Dr. Mincy described the primary goal of the Fatherhood Initiative in terms of encouraging the formation of two-parent families, with paternity establishment being a means of "creating families for children," as well as a mechanism for establishing CSE payments.

For further information about this Forum, or those that were held in Portland, Oregon, and Washington, DC, contact OCSE's Roy Nix at (202) 401-5685. □

Mae Saulter is a Program Liaison Specialist in the Office of the Dallas Regional Administrator. Wendy Russell is a Children and Families Program Specialist in the Office of the Dallas Regional Administrator.

Unintended Pregnancy: Frequent and Widespread in U.S.

As the child support enforcement community continues with its paternity establishment activities, including those under welfare reform, the following may be of interest. Unintended pregnancy is both frequent and widespread in the United States, according to a recent report by the National Research Council of the Institute of Medicine. The most recent estimate is that almost 60 percent of all pregnancies are unintended—either mistimed or unwanted altogether—a percentage higher than that found in several other Western democracies.

The most recent estimate is that almost 60 percent of all pregnancies are unintended—either mistimed or unwanted altogether.

Unintended pregnancy is not just a problem of teenagers or unmarried women, or of poor women or minorities; it affects all segments of society. For example, currently married women and those well beyond adolescence report sobering percentages of unintended pregnancy: in 1987, about 50 percent of pregnancies among women aged 20-34 were unintended, 40 percent of pregnancies to married women were unintended, and more than 75 percent of pregnancies to women over age 40 were unintended.

The percentage of pregnancies that are unintended is, however, even higher among some groups. In 1988, for example, 82 percent of pregnancies among teenagers were unintended, as were 88 percent among never-married women.

In absolute numbers, these percentages mean that of the 5.4 million pregnancies that were estimated to have occurred in 1987, about 3.1 million were unintended at the time of conception. Within this pool of unintended pregnancies, some 1.6 million ended in abortion and 1.5 million resulted in a live birth. Only 2.3 million pregnancies in that year were intended at the time of conception and resulted in a live birth.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, the proportion of births that were unintended at conception decreased. Between 1982 and 1988, however, this trend reversed and the proportion of births that were unintended at conception began increasing.

This trend appears to be continuing into the 1990s. In 1990, about 44 percent of all births were the result of unintended pregnancy;* the proportion was close to 60 percent among women in poverty, 62 percent among black women, 73 percent among never-married women, and 86 percent among unmarried teenagers. □

With permission, from The Best Intentions: Unintended Pregnancy and the Well-Being of Children and Families. *Committee on Unintended Pregnancy, Division of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Institute of Medicine. Sarah S. Brown and Leon Eisenberg, Editors. National Academy Press, Washington, DC, 1995.*

The complete report is available from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Lockbox 285, Washington, DC 20055. Call toll free 1-800 624-6242; Internet: http://www.nap.edu

* The difference between the percentage of pregnancies that are unintended—close to 60 percent—and the percentage of births resulting from unintended pregnancies—about 44 percent—is due to the intervening occurrence of abortion.

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Conference Calendar: 1997

The Calendar is printed quarterly in *CSR* in January, April, July, and October. If you are planning a meeting or conference and would like it to be mentioned in *CSR*, please call OCSE's Roy Nix at (202) 401-5685 or fax it to him at (202) 401-5559.

The Calendar is also accessible through the OCSE web site under the "News" section: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/ACFPrograms/CSE/index.html

The listing is also available on the OCSE Section of ACF's Bulletin Board at 1-800 627-8886.

February

3 National Child Support Enforcement Association's (NCSEA) Mid-Year Policy Forum, Washington Hilton & Towers, Washington, DC, Heather Tonks (202) 624-8180.

4-5 National Child Support Enforcement Association's (NCSEA) "Building a Foundation for Families: Child Support Reform in Action," Washington Hilton & Towers, Washington, DC, Heather Tonks (202) 624-8180.

18-21 California Family Support Council 1997 Annual Conference, Riviera Resort & Racquet Club, Palm Springs, CA, Noanne J. St. Jean (209) 584-1425.

March

5-7 Louisiana Child Support Enforcement Association's Annual Training Conference, Holiday Inn Convention Center, Alexandria, LA, Mike Brown (504) 342-4780.

April

7-9 Mississippi Child Support Association's Sixth Annual Training Conference, Ramada Inn Convention Center, Tupelo, MS, Shirley A. Buford (601) 359-4883.

23-25 North Carolina Child Support Enforcement Council Conference, Raleigh Plaza, Raleigh, NC, Barry Miller (919) 571-4114 X219.

29-May 2 North Dakota Family Support Council Training Conference, Seven Seas Hotel, Mandan, ND, Coby Barstad (701) 662-5374.

May

4-8 Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association (ERICSA), Buffalo, NY, Mary Ann Nore (419) 774-5731.

6-9 California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting, Red Lion Hotel, Sacramento, CA, Noanne J. St. Jean (209) 584-1425.

June

9-11 Colorado Family Support Council Training Conference, Doubletree Antlers Hotel, Colorado Springs, CO, Ken Wimmer (303) 727-2699.

July

8-11 California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting, Catamaran Resort Hotel, San Diego, CA, Noanne J. St. Jean (209) 584-1425. □

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Child Support Report

OCSE Deputy Director Meets with State Legislators

On December 11, OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross spoke to approximately 100 state legislators and staff at the National Conference of State Legislatures Joint Assembly on State Federal Issues in Washington, DC. He emphasized the need for legislators to be knowledgeable about how welfare reform may impact state child support enforcement programs.

"We must ensure," he said, "that parents take responsibility for the children they bring into the world."

The OCSE Deputy Director thanked the legislators for their past bi-partisan support and efforts on behalf of child support enforcement and challenged them to become even more involved with the implementation of welfare reform.

"Children are our future."

Judge Ross pledged to consult with state legislators and provide opportunities for their input during the development of the regulations. "Children are our future," he said, "and this legislation, fully implemented, will help secure for them a brighter, more prosperous tomorrow." ☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement **Vol. XIX, No. 2, February 1997**

Massachusetts Parents Use Internet to Apply for Child Support

Parents in Massachusetts who are applying for child support enforcement services from the Department of Revenue (DOR) can now file the application directly over the Internet. Massachusetts becomes the first State in the nation with this interactive capability.

Placing the application on-line makes it easier for more parents to access DOR's services.

Placing the application on-line makes it easier for more parents to access DOR's services. "The Internet has over the past two years been one of the fastest growing mediums for information, and DOR has remained on the cutting edge of the opportunities presented by this emerging technology," Revenue Commissioner Mitchell Adams said.

"Our success with Telefile," he continued, "allowing people to file their taxes over the telephone, showed us the advantages of giving them more ways to contact the Department."

Massachusetts Revenue Commissioner Mitchell Adams

As part of the agency's continuing outreach effort to make information more available to families, DOR is expanding its Home Page on the World Wide Web to include the application, along with recent press releases and informative articles. It also includes "Wanted on the Web," DOR's enforcement efforts to locate 20 of its Most Wanted delinquent child support payors.

Those who do not have computers at home will still be able to benefit from the enhancements to DOR's child support Web site. For example, an individual may access the on-line application at community access centers and libraries, or through his or her attorney on the case. DOR's child support enforcement Web address is http://www.mst.oa.net□

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
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Shalala Announces National Strategy to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Donna E. Shalala, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), has announced a comprehensive new plan to prevent teen pregnancies. The new strategy, which has clear implications for child support enforcement and such issues as paternity establishment, will strengthen the Department's ongoing efforts to assure that every community in the country is working to prevent out-of-wedlock teen pregnancies by:

- Increasing opportunities through welfare reform;
- Supporting promising approaches;
- Building public-private partnerships;
- Improving data collection, research, and evaluation; and
- Disseminating information on innovative and effective practices.

In launching the strategy, the Secretary cited new data showing that the majority of states experienced a decline in teen birth rates from 1991 to 1994.

According to the latest state-by-state statistics on teen births, 37 states had a sustained decline in their teen birth rates between 1991 and 1994. Twenty-one of these states had declines of between 5 and 10 percent, and 10 states had declines of more than 10 percent over this period.

Overall, the birth rate for teens aged 15-19 declined for the fourth straight year, decreasing by 8 percent between 1991 and 1995.

Each year about 200,000 teenagers aged 17 and younger have children. Their babies are often low-birth weight and have disproportionately high infant mortality rates. They are also far more likely to be poor.

"We are committed," the Secretary said, "to an effort to engage every community in America to work together to prevent teen pregnancy and send a strong message to our children that postponing sexual activity, staying in school, and preparing to work are the right things to do."

DHHS currently supports a variety of efforts to help communities develop comprehensive teen pregnancy prevention strategies that reflect five principles: parental and adult involvement; strong messages of abstinence and personal responsibility; clear strategies for young people's futures; involvement by all facets of communities; and a sustained commitment to young people. □

Most Wanted Posters

On July 22, 1996, the President announced that the U.S. Postal Service would work with state IV-D agencies to display their Most Wanted posters in post offices of states having such posters. (See October '96 *CSR*.) *CSR* has learned that the following states have placed child support Most Wanted posters in U.S. Postal facilities:

California
Connecticut
Indiana
Kansas
Massachusetts
Oregon
South Dakota.

If you know of other states that are doing this, please pass the information along to your OCSE regional office. □

State Directors Sign Partnership Agreement

State IV-D directors and federal officials met in late September, 1996, in a day-long session following OCSE's Sixth National Training Conference to reach consensus on a partnership agreement between the National Council of State Child Support Enforcement Administrators (NCSCSEA) and the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE).

OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross and NCSCSEA President Jim Hennessey signed the partnership agreement in January of this year.

The agreement is intended to strengthen the working relationships among state and federal IV-D partners.

While substantial progress has been made in establishing paternity and obtaining support for children and families, the participants acknowledge that more progress is needed. To this end, the partners to the agreement commit themselves to improved communication and collaboration, a trusting and respectful relationship, and a renewed commitment to actions in support of each other in accomplishing shared goals.

Further, recognizing their interdependence for success, the partners commit themselves to a relationship that emphasizes outcomes, technical assistance, service, and recognition.

The agreement is intended to strengthen the working relationships among state and federal IV-D partners in order to achieve the goals, through more effective collaboration and constructive change, of the National Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan. The agreement incorporates the strategic plan by reference.

In their agreement, the partners pledge to:

- Negotiate state-specific Performance Partnership Agreements between individual states and regional offices to accomplish the goals of the program and the National Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan;
- Be flexible in working toward shared goals;

- Understand and respect the different roles, responsibilities, and perspectives of their partners and recognize their respective external influences and limitations;
- Identify and work to remove barriers to achievement of shared goals; and
- Determine processes by which issues will be identified, workgroups appointed, and recommendations reported.

If you would like further information, call OCSE's Myles Schlank at (202) 401-9329.□

Guidelines Report Now Available

The *Evaluation of Child Support Guidelines* was conducted from October, 1994, to March, 1996, and focused on three issues: (1) how guidelines are applied; (2) how deviations come about; and (3) how special circumstances are dealt with in determining child support awards. The report is in two volumes: Volume 1, "Findings and Conclusions;" and Volume II, "Findings of State Guideline Reviews, State Guideline Studies, and Unstructured Interviews." For your copy call OCSE's National Resource Center at (202) 401-9383.□

CSE Waivers and Welfare Reform

By Elizabeth Lower-Basch

The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program contained a number of provisions with child support implications. Recipients were required to assign child support collections to AFDC and to cooperate in establishing paternity and enforcing child support.

States were required to pass-through the first $50 of current month child support payments to the family and to disregard this amount in determining the family's AFDC eligibility or the benefit amount. The remainder of the child support collected was shared between the state and the federal government.

Waivers to 19 States increased the requirements for cooperation with child support enforcement.

In recent years, these requirements were often modified by waivers granted by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) under the authority provided in section 1115 of the Social Security Act (see February '96 *CSR*). Although the AFDC program has now been supplanted by the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, these waivers are still relevant to the policy discussion.

- First, states with waivers approved prior to passage of the new law may continue these waivers. This may be critical in cases where TANF is more restrictive than the waivers;
- Second, in order to receive federal approval for waivers, states were required to conduct rigorous evaluations of their impact. These evaluations may provide important evidence on the effect of the waivers; and
- Third, many projects conducted under waivers are now allowable state options under the TANF block grant.

Employment and Training

The most frequently granted waiver with child support implications was allowing noncustodial parents to participate in the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Training program, so they could find employment and thus pay child support. Such waivers were received by 23 states. Sometimes participation was voluntary; in other cases, courts required parents who were delinquent in child support payments to participate. Under TANF, states are allowed to place noncustodial parents of recipient children in approved work activities.

Modified Pass-Through and Disregard

The next most common type of waiver, received by 20 states, affected the pass-through and disregard. Fourteen states received waivers allowing an increase in the pass-through and/or the disregard. Three states received waivers allowing elimination of the pass-through. These waivers enabled states to test the effectiveness of the pass-through in increasing child support collections. Five states received waivers from the Department of Agriculture allowing them to disregard the amount of the pass-through in calculating food stamps as well as AFDC benefits. A smaller number of states increased the pass-through or disregard only for those children who were affected by a "family cap" provision, which denies aid to children conceived while their parents were receiving AFDC.

Under TANF, the $50 pass-through has been eliminated. States may opt to disregard or pass-through some or all of the child support collected to the custodial family; however, they must then reimburse the federal government for its share of all of the collections made on behalf of TANF clients.

Cooperation with Child Support Enforcement

DHHS granted waivers to 19 states that increased the requirements for cooperation with child support enforcement, and/or increased the sanction for failure to cooperate. Most increased the sanction for noncooperation to denial of benefits to the entire assistance unit, not just the noncooperating parents. A few moved

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responsibility for determination of cooperation away from AFDC to the child support office. In order to locate noncustodial parents more easily, some states received waivers allowing them to require parents to provide information such as the Social Security number and the last known address of noncustodial parents.

The child support enforcement provisions have been strengthened under TANF. Under AFDC, the sanction for failure to cooperate without good cause, or for refusal to assign payments, was denial of the custodial parent's share of the AFDC grant; under TANF, the minimum sanction is a 25 percent reduction in the family's monthly grant, and states have the option to end assistance altogether.

Other Waivers

Finally, some states received waivers that range from one-time bonus payments for establishing paternity, to pilot projects testing child support assurance, to projects providing counseling and other assistance to non custodial parents. Many of these kinds of projects will be allowable under TANF, without the need for waivers.

For a copy of a matrix that shows which states have received waivers related to child support, contact OCSE's National Resource Center at (202) 401-9383.□

Elizabeth Lower-Basch is a Presidential Management Intern in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, DHHS.

Twenty-four Hour Access in Texas

Texas Attorney General Dan Morales recently announced that around-the-clock access to child support case information is now available to parents. Custodial parents can call the child support enforcement program's 24 hour Voice Information Response System (VIRS) to obtain a broad range of information about their cases and the child support enforcement program.

Parents can call 1-800-252-8014 to receive such automated information as payment and case status, dates and times for scheduled hearings, recent legal actions taken, and phone numbers for child support field offices. They also can request an application for services and information on paternity testing, license suspension, and welfare reform.

Increases parents' access to case information.

"The 24 hour system increases parents' access to case information important to them, and it allows case workers the time to actively work cases rather than answer questions that can easily be handled by VIRS," Morales said. Currently, Texas child support enforcement caseworkers and attorneys handle nearly 860,000 cases each year—nearly 1,127 cases for each caseworker and 5,058 for each attorney.

"Staff have managed a delicate balance between spending time reassuring parents about case progress and actually having the time to ensure that child support is paid for their children," Morales said. "We believe the extended hours will benefit working parents by enabling them to obtain case information quickly at any hour of the day. At the same time, VIRS will allow us to serve more Texas children and their families."

If you would like to know more about the VIRS system, call Albert Cortez at (512) 460-6000 X 2560.□

Texas Attorney General Dan Morales

OCSE and Other ACF Programs Collaborate

By John Doyle

Staff from OCSE and other ACF programs are combining efforts to bring awareness of child support enforcement (CSE) services to eligible single-parent families participating in other ACF programs, such as Child Care and Head Start.

In engaging other ACF programs to promote awareness of child support, OCSE encourages their clients to consider the benefits of CSE services for their families. In this manner, ACF programs can function in a complementary role to each other and provide more help to families.

Child Care

For some time now, OCSE and Child Care staff have been speaking at each other's state program staff meetings and in coordination workshops. Presenters have emphasized how, since welfare reform, child care and child support payments are critical for families transitioning from welfare to self-sufficiency; how CSE services can help children financially and emotionally; and how state child care and child support staff need to cooperate in assuring that child support payment orders adequately provide for child care costs.

Community Services

Last November, OCSE entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of Community Services (OCS) to foster working partnerships in the states and local communities among CSE agencies, OCS grantees, and Community Action Agencies (CAAs). The purpose of these partnerships is to develop and implement innovative strategies to assist low-income parents to fulfill their parental responsibilities.

Part of the focus of these partnerships is to help low-income noncustodial parents of children receiving benefits under the new Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program (TANF) to achieve self-sufficiency, so they can provide financial support for their families without reliance on TANF.

Through this effort, state and local CSE agencies, OCS grantees, and CAAs will be encouraged to engage in community dialogues on: positive roles for fathers in families; nurturing parenting skills; and individual rights and responsibilities under the CSE program.

Family Assistance

OCSE also is working with the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) in an effort to promote closer collaboration with the new TANF program. OCSE staff are analyzing TANF state plans to identify provisions which touch on CSE concerns, such as teenage pregnancy prevention and domestic violence, as well as provisions for integrating the TANF CSE programs in the states. The findings, recorded on a state-by-state matrix, provide a useful tool for staff working with welfare reform. The matrix contains information on 35 states and continues to be updated as additional states submit their TANF plans to DHHS. OCSE and OFA are also working to promote linkages between TANF and CSE staffs at state and local levels to increase the capacity of low-income, noncustodial parents to make child support payments.

Head Start

Some 2,000 Head Start programs throughout the nation have been invited to engage in an initiative to promote CSE services for Head Start single-parent families. OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross and Head Start Bureau Associate Commissioner Helen Taylor jointly signed the letter launching this major initiative.

The letter asks each local Head Start program director to inform every family in the program about CSE services; establish a procedure for referring potentially eligible parents to the local child support enforcement office for services; and make referral arrangements with them. A companion letter, sent to state child support enforcement directors, asks them to facilitate linkages between the Head Start program and local child support enforcement offices.

The measure of the success of these various collaborative activities with other ACF programs will be in the numbers of new paternities established and new child support payment orders established and enforced. Through collaborating with its sister programs in ACF, OCSE continues to give hope and support to America's children. □

John Doyle is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Division of Program Operations.

FYI: CSE Action Transmittals—Systems

Two recent OCSE action transmittals (ATs) contain important information on systems. OCSE AT-96-09, a final regulation, dated December 23, 1996, implemented the President's Regulatory Reinvention Initiative and Public Law 104-35. It extends to October 1, 1997, the deadline for states to have in place a certified operational computerized support enforcement system meeting all requirements of federal law enacted on or before the date of enactment of the Family Support Act of 1988.

AT-96-09 extends to 10-1-97 the deadline for states to have in place a certified computer system.

In addition, the regulation removes obsolete, out-of-date and nonmandated provisions regarding: maintenance of records, nonAFDC applicants, cooperative agreements, interstate services, distribution, notice of collection of assigned support, case assessment and prioritization, use of the Courts of the United States to enforce court orders, State Commissions on child support, and optional cooperative agreements for medical support enforcement.

OCSE-AT-96-10, also dated December 23, 1996, informs states of the availability and limitations of receiving federal funding at the 90 percent and 80 percent federal financial participation (FFP) rates for costs incurred in developing and implementing an automated child support enforcement (ADP) system.

The Family Support Act of 1988 provided federal funding at the 90 percent FFP rate for ADP development and implementation costs through September 30, 1995. Public Law 104-35, which extended the deadline for implementing a certified, operational ADP system (as noted above) did not extend the availability of FFP at the 90 percent rate.

Public Law 104-193, the welfare reform legislation, however, reinstates FFP at the 90 percent rate, with limits, retroactive to October 1, 1995, and through September 30, 1997, to enable states to complete the development and implementation of a system that meets the requirements of the Family Support Act.

In addition, under the welfare reform bill, a limited amount of federal funds will be allocated to each state and will be available at an 80 percent FFP rate to assist in meeting these additional requirements.

For information regarding AT-96-09, call Marilyn R. Cohen at (202) 401-5366; for AT-96-10 call Mike Bratt at (202) 401-4629. If you would like copies of these ATs, call OCSE's National Resource Center at (202) 401-9383. □

"Motor Voter" Rule Issued

By Marilyn R. Cohen

The Administration for Children and Families and the Health Care Financing Administration jointly issued a final rule in November, 1996, implementing provisions of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. Dubbed "the Motor Voter Rule" when it took effect on November 13, the rule makes it easier for individuals to register and vote in federal elections. It contains three provisions:

- The simultaneous application for or renewal of drivers licenses and voter registration;
- The adoption and use of a mail application form for voter registration; and
- The designation of state voter registration agencies, including all offices in a state that provide public assistance, as well as state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to disabled persons.

Public assistance agencies include Food Stamp, Medicaid, WIC (women, infants, and children) and TANF. □

Marilyn Cohen is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Division of Policy and Planning.

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OCSE Consults with Advocates on Access/Visitation

As part of its outreach on welfare reform regulations development, OCSE recently conducted a two-hour consultation with advocates on the access and visitation provisions of the new law.

The meeting, a nationwide video/audio conference held simultaneously in the central office and the regions, and via phone lines, drew more than 100 participants.

Those who took part represented a broad array of child support advocacy organizations, as well as organizations focusing on domestic violence and judicial/legal matters related to child support.

A lively exchange of views characterized this effort by the agency to involve advocates in the regulations development process. ☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XIX, No. 3, March 1997

Child Support/Head Start Collaboration Gets A "Head Start" in Virginia

By: Diane Kendall

On August 28, 1996, the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement and the Head Start Bureau issued a jointly signed letter outlining initiatives to promote child support services for single-parent families in Head Start (see February '97 *CSR*). The initiative invited agencies to take three steps to assure child support services for Head Start families:

- Provide each Head Start family with information on child support services;
- Establish a procedure to refer potentially eligible parents to the local child support office; and
- Arrange for referrals with the local child support enforcement office.

Receipt of this letter prompted Kathy Channell, Director of the Head Start program in Prince William County, Virginia, to contact the local child support enforcement (CSE) office in Manassas, Virginia. She knew that this community linkage, like others that have been an integral part of the Prince William Head Start program, could support needed comprehensive efforts targeted to single-parent families in their program.

A meeting in early December, 1996, between Head Start's Channell, CSE Operations Supervisor Margaret Murray, and CSE Intake Supervisor Betty McDonald established a framework for this collaboration and also disclosed mutual interests and rapport. Participants discovered that, instead of acting separately, they could constitute a "team" of caring people working toward a common goal of assisting children and families to overcome adversity.

"It's so easy," Channell said, "to get bogged down in the work of your own program and forget how much stronger you can be when working together with your partners in other programs."

CSE provided applications and

explained how cases were developed, prioritized and processed. Working together, a plan was developed to provide Head Start families with information about child support services, including paternity establishment. Head Start Family Service Workers would distribute child support enforcement pamphlets to parents during home visits.

The pamphlets, in Spanish and English, would be beneficial to the population served by this Head Start program. With applications in hand, Head Start Family Service Workers would be able to assist parents in completing and submitting the appropriate paperwork.

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Office of Child Support Enforcement

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Thus, barriers that previously prevented Head Start parents from applying for CSE assistance would now be eliminated.

Additionally, the team developed a plan for referral and follow-up of Head Start family cases. The plan was immediately tested by a parent who had been experiencing difficulty with her child support payments. Payments were erratic and often less than anticipated.

In less than one week, an extremely grateful parent received a back payment of $1,500.

The case was outlined to Betty McDonald, who immediately reviewed the parent's case file. It was determined that contact would have to be made with the CSE office in New York. In less than one week, an extremely grateful parent received a back payment of $1,500 and the newly-formed Child Support/Head Start team experienced immense satisfaction from the success of their combined efforts.

Although other cases may not always achieve such immediate and dramatic outcomes, the team is convinced that the benefits of this partnership will give families a "head start" in their goal to become economically independent. □

Diane Kendall is a Head Start Specialist in the Philadelphia Regional Office.

Oklahoma Child Support Reaches Out to Head Start

By Ronnie Bates

Oklahoma's Child Support Enforcement (CSE) Division has been providing information to Head Start programs in the State since January, 1996. At that time, we responded to an inquiry about CSE services from the Head Start office in the town of Coweta, Oklahoma, by sending handbooks and posters.

Suspecting a State-wide need for information, we obtained a list of Head Start directors throughout the State and sent each a letter explaining our services, along with a package of CSE publications and posters.

Many of the directors immediately contacted us, requesting more posters and copies of the handbook to give to their local Head Start sites. Several asked for presentations to staff and parents about the services CSE provides—a request that we were glad to act on.

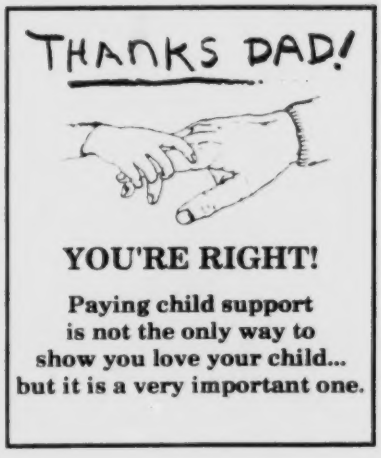
We have found in doing this outreach that many people are not well informed about the services provided by CSE programs.

Many of the directors requested posters and copies of the handbook to give to their local Head Start sites.

Through outreach we are hoping to reduce the level of misinformation about CSE, as well as to help those custodial parents who receive little or no child support gain a better understanding of their options.

We have notified all of Oklahoma's CSE offices to communicate with the Head Start staff in their counties and are encouraging our staff to make the initial contact to coordinate referral processes for CSE services. We also are promoting responsible decision-making on parenting by making presentations in middle and high schools across the State and are hopeful that this partnership will have a positive effect in helping to reduce the number of teen pregnancies in Oklahoma. □

Ronnie Bates is Administrative Officer in Oklahoma's Child Support Enforcement Division.



Access and Visitation: New Grants Available

Donna E. Shalala, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, recently announced to all Governors the availability, through the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform), of grants to the states for access and visitation programs. The welfare reform legislation provides up to $10 million annually for this purpose. "We look forward," the Secretary said in making the announcement, "to fashioning a partnership in this new program, a program with the potential to positively impact the lives of children and their parents."

Included in the legislation are grants to help states establish programs that support and facilitate noncustodial parents' visitation with and access to their children. Examples of eligible programs include, but are not limited to: mediation, counseling, education, development of parenting plans, visitation enforcement, and development of guidelines for visitation and alternative custody arrangements.

The grant amount for each state in a fiscal year will be the lesser amount of 90 percent of state expenditures during the fiscal year for eligible activities or a formula-based allotment. The formula will be based on the ratio of the number of children in the state living with only one biological parent in relation to the total number of such children in all states. In 1997, however, no state will receive less than $50,000.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is responsible for issuing regulations setting forth how states "shall monitor, evaluate, and report on such programs." Within ACF, program administration resides with OCSE. States have considerable flexibility in determining appropriate administrative arrangements. The grants may be used to create or enhance state-run programs or to fund grants or contracts with courts, local public agencies, or nonprofit private entities. Programs do not have to operate statewide.

If you would like more information about these access and visitation grants, contact OCSE's David Arnaudo at (202) 401-5364.□

Sharing the Parenting but Not Sharing a Home

Even in the most harmonious, intact families, different backgrounds, expectations, and styles parents bring to child-rearing can make sharing the parenting a difficult task. The acrimony, miles, and lack of commitment to one another that separate many divorced or never-married parents make the job that much harder.

Consider this: 55 to 60 percent of all American children live with only one parent at some point in their childhoods. Only about 25 percent of those whose parents divorce see their fathers at least once a week. For those whose parents have never wed, the numbers are usually lower.

Mental health professionals believe that parents are more likely to succeed in "sharing the parenting" when they:

- Respect one another's right to be with the children, adhering to time-sharing agreements and avoiding bad-mouthing one another, especially in front of the kids;
- Avoid competition, reinforcing the children's right and need to love them both;
- Keep conflict to a minimum, never placing the children in the middle of an argument;
- Consistently fulfill their commitments to both the children and each other, yet stay flexible enough to accommodate reasonable changes in plans;
- Involve children in age-appropriate decisions about where and how they spend their time; and
- Seek outside support from family, friends, community, and others to help buffer the stress of raising a child alone.□

With permission, from "Dialogue," *Volume Four, Number 4, Fall 1996, published by the Institute for Mental Health Initiatives. The Institute promotes mental health by making the latest research in the behavioral sciences accessible to the public and the creative community.*

Responsible Fathering

A consensus is now emerging that responsible fathering means establishing paternity, being present in the child's life (even if divorced or unmarried), sharing economic support, and being personally involved in the child's life in collaboration with the mother.

While innovative programs to promote better fathering have multiplied in the past decade, they are often not connected either to research or theory. A recently released report, *"Responsible Fathering: An Overview and Conceptual Framework,"* by William J. Doherty, Edward F. Kouneski, and Martha Farrell Erickson, all of the University of Minnesota, summarizes the research on factors that influence fathering and presents a systemic, contextual framework that highlights multiple interacting influences on the father-child relationship. These include father factors, mother factors, child factors, coparental factors, and broader contextual factors.

A father who lacks a good relationship with the mother is at risk to be a nonresponsible father, especially if he does not reside with the child, as is a father who lacks adequate employment and income.

A principal finding of this report is that fathering, even more than mothering, is influenced by contextual forces in the family and the community. A father who lacks a good relationship with the mother is at risk to be a nonresponsible father, especially if he does not reside with the child, as is a father who lacks adequate employment and income. On the other hand, this contextual sensitivity means that fathering can change in response to shifts in cultural, economic, institutional, and interpersonal influences.

The principal implication for fathering programs is that these programs should involve a wide range of

interventions, reflecting the multiple domains of responsible fathering, the varied residential and marital circumstances of fathers, and the array of personal, relational, and ecological factors that influence men as fathers. In particular, fathering programs should:

- Involve mothers where feasible and, especially for unmarried fathers, families of origin;
- Promote collaborative coparenting inside and outside marriage;
- Emphasize critical transitions, such as birth of the child and divorce of the parents;
- Deal with employment, economic issues, and community systems;
- Provide opportunities for fathers to learn from each other; and
- Promote the viability of caring, committed, and collaborative marriages.

The full text copy of the report is available on the world wide web at http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/fathers/concept.htm. For single copies of the report, contact Linda Mellgren in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, DHHS at (202) 690-6806. □

With permission, from "Responsible Fathering: An Overview and Conceptual Framework," *September, 1996, by William J. Doherty, Ph.D., Department of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota; Edward F. Kouneski, M.A., Department of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota; and Martha Farrell Erickson, Ph.D., Children, Youth, and Family Consortium, University of Minnesota.*

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Meeting the New Hire Deadline

By: Karen H. Bartlett

Under welfare reform legislation, half the states face a deadline of October 1, 1997, to have their new hire directories up and running. (Those with existing programs have until October 1, 1998.) To help meet the statutory deadline, OCSE is fortunate to have established a partnership with the Social Security Administration in the design, development, and operation of the Expanded Federal Parent Locater Service (FPLS).

"As one of the first states to start a new hire reporting program, we welcomed the opportunity to work with OCSE and other states on implementing new hire reporting on a national level."

..... John Main, Alaska

"The October 1 deadline to report new hire information to the National Directory of New Hires is challenging," admits Donna Bonar, Director of OCSE's Division of Program Operations and the official charged with overseeing this major undertaking. "But we have been doing our homework in OCSE and have been able to provide states with guidance and opportunities to learn from other states that already have programs in place." One such program is Alaska, whose Child Support Enforcement Officer, John Main, says, "As one of the first states to start a new hire reporting program, we welcomed the opportunity to work with OCSE and other states on implementing new hire reporting on a national level."

The Expanded FPLS includes a National Directory of New Hires that will contain quarterly wage data from State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs), as well as a Federal Case Registry (FCR), which will be a repository for all child support cases in the nation and an important aid in interstate case processing.

In March, 1995, well before the passage of welfare reform, OCSE formed a series of welfare reform workgroups, with federal and state staff membership, to study issues surrounding various aspects of proposed legislation, including new hire reporting. "OCSE got off the mark early on new hire by setting up the new hire workgroup," says Kay Dunkelberger, Manager of Minnesota's Interstate Locate Unit, "and we benefited tremendously from it."

OCSE also hosted a conference which brought state child support enforcement (CSE) agencies and SESAs together to share best practices on developing new hire reporting programs, discuss outstanding issues, and determine what was needed to ensure success in meeting the deadline. The proceedings of that conference were mailed out to all participants and to IV-D directors. A "how to" manual, which combines the proceedings and other materials requested by states, and is to be regularly updated, is expected to be available by late March, 1997.

Another resource for states is a set of cost benefit studies. These have been compiled into a document to illustrate the effectiveness of new hire reporting from a variety of perspectives.

An employer outreach plan is also underway. OCSE has developed a brochure entitled "Increasing Financial Support for Our Nation's Children," which was distributed to 6.3 million employers by the IRS in its quarterly mailing. A second mailing is planned later this year. OCSE staff also met recently with national employer associations to brief them on the new reporting requirements and provide them with state new hire reporting contact lists and a sample article for use in their newsletters.

For more information, contact Karen Bartlett at (202) 401-4630.□

Karen Bartlett is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Division of Program Operations and Project Officer of a national contract for the Expanded FPLS.

Enforcement of Child Support: Reciprocity with Foreign Nations An Important Part of Welfare Reform

By: Stephen Grant

With the passage of welfare reform, a new era of international child support enforcement, with authority to strengthen procedures to collect child support across national boundaries, will become a reality. Under the new legislation, the State Department, with concurrence of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), has authority to declare nations to be foreign reciprocating countries for child support enforcement on behalf of all U.S. states and territories.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform) responds to concerns expressed about the previous state-by-state method of establishing procedures to enforce child support obligations across national borders. It mandates that all states adopt the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act and authorizes the Federal Government to negotiate federal level agreements directly with foreign governments along the lines of the bilateral agreements previously negotiated by individual states. The legislation also:

- Mandates that, in order to be designated as a foreign reciprocating country, a nation will have to establish procedures available to residents of the U.S. for establishment of paternity, establishment of orders, enforcement of orders, and collection and distribution of support payments, including cost-free administrative and legal assistance as necessary;
- Provides federal IV-D funding for provision of support enforcement services in the U.S., at no cost, to residents of foreign reciprocating countries who wish to enforce support obligations against individuals living in the U.S.;
- Leaves individual states free to continue existing state-negotiated reciprocity arrangements with foreign jurisdictions in those cases where the U.S. Federal Government has not established reciprocity; and
- Establishes DHHS as the international child support enforcement central authority for the United States.

These international provisions provide for federal level assistance to implement an efficient, workable, and uniform system in cooperation with the states and with participating foreign countries. If you would like further information, contact Stephen Grant at (202) 260-5943.□

Stephen Grant is OCSE's International Officer.

Law Enforcement Liaison Established in OCSE

OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross has named Donald A. Deering, an experienced law enforcement officer, as Chief Law Enforcement Liaison for the agency's Special Initiatives Team. Mr. Deering will focus on strengthening OCSE's ties with the criminal justice system. Initiatives will include:

- Administering a law enforcement/CSE needs assessment;
- Developing a standardized protocol of accessing law enforcement records information;
- Developing a best practices data base on investigations, warrant and summons services, locate, media coverage, enforcement techniques and tactics, extradition, and office and personal security;
- Investigating local, state, and federal criminal justice agency problems relating to CSE issues;
- Conducting regional and national conferences for criminal justice agencies and health and human service providers; and
- Establishing a national clearinghouse for child support/criminal justice information.

If you would like more information about this activity, call Don Deering at (202) 401-1063.□

New OCSE Branch to Assist States

By Duke Wilson

A new unit has been created within OCSE to help states get the technical assistance they need to operate successful child support enforcement (CSE) programs. The Technical Assistance Branch, led by Jeff Ball, is located within the Division of State and Local Assistance (see August '96 *CSR*).

The work of the branch supplements the role of OCSE's regional offices in providing states and localities with high quality information, assistance, and expertise. In coordination with the regional office, the branch consults with states and localities to assess problem areas and to identify available resources to address them. "Our job," Jeff says, "is not to duplicate or replace assistance already being provided by state and federal child support workers but rather to fill technical assistance gaps."

In assessing states' technical assistance needs, the branch attempts to match resources to those needs, while providing planning assistance that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the national strategic plan. It serves also as a clearinghouse for sharing specialized program techniques and promoting the transfer of best practices among states and localities.

The establishment of the Technical Assistance Branch is a direct outcome of the new welfare reform legislation, which provides additional funding for OCSE technical assistance, training, and information dissemination. The legislation also supports new research and demonstration efforts, as well as special projects to improve the operation of existing CSE programs.

Reflected in the new legislation is the view that while considerable progress has been achieved, there is still room for improvement in the performance of the CSE program. OCSE is dedicated to ensuring that all children are supported financially and emotionally by both parents when the parents do not live together. Thus, an initial branch focus is to help states enhance the core processes of child support enforcement: improving the rate of establishment of paternity and support orders and the rate of compliance with those orders.

The TA Branch, l. to r., front, Gina Barbero, Susan Greenblatt, Jeff Ball, Susan Notar; l. to r., back, Terry Justin, Pat Wilson, Ann Slayton, Sheila LeBlanc, Bomani Ajamu. Not shown, Duke Wilson.

Procedures for identifying and responding to requests for technical assistance have been developed jointly by the branch and a Technical Assistance Workgroup, whose membership includes OCSE central and regional office staff, as well as state and local representatives. These procedures vary by the source of the request (state, local, or federal) and by the type of assistance requested (on-site, technology transfer, workshop, etc.). The procedures are intended to maximize prior consultation with and cooperation among state, local, and federal partners in the CSE system. The Workgroup met in late February to develop a technical assistance resource allocation plan based on state needs assessment feedback, federal regional office input, and national initiatives.

The new Technical Assistance Branch, in short, reaffirms the vision of child support enforcement as a federal, state, local partnership and the commitment of service to children and families. If you would like more information about its activities, contact the branch chief, Jeff Ball, at (202) 401-5427. □

Duke Wilson is a Program Analyst in the Technical Assistance Branch of OCSE's Division of State and Local Assistance.

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Deputy Director Addresses NCSEA Mid-Year Policy Forum

OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross addressed an audience of 340 child support enforcement officials and staff at NCSEA's 10th Annual Mid-year Policy Forum, held in Washington, DC, February 3, 1997. This year's Forum focus: welfare reform. Judge Ross reviewed the CSE program's accomplishments in the past year and affirmed his and the agency's continuing commitment to excellence. Pledging to redouble efforts to establish lines of communication with partners in Head Start and Child Care programs, he said that "If we keep the interests of our children first, we can do anything." NCSEA's Policy Forum was followed by a two-day conference on "Building

David Gray Ross

A Foundation for Families: Child Support Reform in Action." For further information about NCSEA, its policy forums, or the conference, contact Heather Tonks at (202) 624-8180. ☐

Child Support Report
Vol. XIX No. 3
March 1997

Child Support Report is a publication of the Office of Child Support Enforcement, Division of Consumer Services.

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement **Vol. XIX, No. 4, April 1997**

Big 8 Initiative Kick-Off

By Marion Steffy

A major new federal/state/local partnership initiative to increase paternity establishment and child support collection rates is underway in OCSE. The focus is on the eight states with the largest child support caseloads. The "Big 8" are California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Together, their caseloads, and distributed collections, make up nearly 50 percent of the national total.

"A successful Big 8 initiative will dramatically improve the lives of thousands of children."

David Gray Ross

On February 24, senior Big 8 state officials met with their federal headquarters and regional counterparts in New Orleans to begin identifying the many tasks that will need to be done to ensure success. "This is a great start," Robert Doar, Director of New York State's Office of Child Support Enforcement, said. "Recognizing the special problems faced by states with large caseloads is a strong first step in federal efforts to help them improve performance."

The Big 8 States, in Color

Marion Steffy, director of the Big 8 operation, indicated that a central part of the effort would involve coordinating with senior officials and technical experts in headquarters, regional offices, and the field. She also took note of the rich body of knowledge and experience already available in those states not part of the Big 8.

"Their contributions," she said, "in the form of working models and best practices, will be a necessary part of our efforts to be successful with this project."

OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross stated that "a successful Big 8 Initiative will dramatically improve the lives of thousands of children. While we recognize the importance of working with all states, and indeed have entered into partnership agreements to do just that, by concentrating resources on those states with the largest caseloads," he said, "we expect to see the greatest possible gains in the shortest possible time."

In opening remarks to the group, Judge Ross addressed presidential priorities, executive expectations, goals, and the resources available to develop projects which meet the requirements of legislation.

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

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Marion Steffy discussed the importance of establishing and maintaining a communications network and creating a forum in which states could learn from one another through information sharing and problem resolution during the course of this initiative.

"Recognizing the special problems faced by states with large caseloads is a strong first step." .....*Robert Doar*

Early in the meeting, each state had the opportunity to highlight models, identify barriers, and enter into preliminary discussion of potential projects. "I'm impressed with the candor of participants in this meeting," commented Michigan's Office of Child Support Director Wallace Dutkowski. "The willingness to share information, both positive and negative, about programs is really refreshing."

"The willingness to share information, both positive and negative, about programs is really refreshing." .....*Wallace Dutkowski*

Participants took part in coordinated planning sessions to develop state-specific projects designed to meet the common needs of states with large caseloads. An important requirement of the projects: They must harmonize with the broad CSE goal of attaining financial and emotional security for children and families. Plans are currently underway to design strategies around the requests for action on program-specific and program-related priority areas.

If you are interested in learning more about the Big 8 Initiative, contact Marion Steffy at (312) 353-5160.□

Marion Steffy is Director of OCSE's Performance Initiative.

Second World Congress

By: Debra Pontisso

In partnership with the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC), the Second World Congress on Family Law and the Rights of Children and Youth will be held June 3-7, 1997, in San Francisco, California. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton is Honorary Chair.

Topics to be covered include activities permissible under the Child Support Access and Visitation Block Grant to States, such as child custody mediation; parent education; custody evaluation; parent alienation; and legal representation of children.

For information on registration fees and hotel, contact: AFCC, 329 W. Wilson Street, Madison, WI 53703 at (608) 251-4001.□

Debra Pontisso is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Division of State and Local Assistance.

FYI: Health Insurance

Under the CSE program, unless the custodial parent and children have satisfactory health insurance other than Medicaid, the IV-D agency must petition the court or administrative authority to include health insurance that is available to the absent parent at reasonable cost in new or modified court or administrative orders for support. Still, many children continue to lack coverage.

The Census Bureau reports that in 1995, 66.1 percent of all children under age 18 were covered by a privately purchased or employment-based health plan, while 23.2 percent were covered by Medicaid. But 9.8 million children under the age of 18, one-third of whom were poor, lacked health insurance coverage altogether. These findings are based on newly released data from the Census Bureau's March, 1996, Current Population Survey.

This and additional information can be found on the Census Bureau's Internet Home Page at:http://www.census.gov/hhes/hlthins/chldhins.html.□

Training Needs Assessment Results

[The new welfare reform law sets aside one percent of the federal share of child support collected and applied to reimburse the states for public assistance outlays to perform a variety of activities, including the provision of training and technical assistance to states.]

State child support enforcement trainers prefer high-tech computer and satellite based training technology and video conferencing techniques to those of the still widely used traditional classroom approach, according to a recently completed state training needs assessment by OCSE's National CSE Training Workgroup.

The needs assessment, distributed by the Child Support Enforcement Directors' Association, and responded to by 21 states, is part of a coordinated effort to identify training needs, as defined by states themselves, and to develop innovative methods to meet them.

The Training Workgroup, acting as an arm of OCSE's National Training Center (NTC), is assisting in the development of a national strategy to meet the diverse needs of state trainers. Yvette Hilderson Riddick, NTC's chief, says: "One very valuable aspect of the Workgroup is that it serves as a medium for consideration of all viewpoints related to training."

Established by NTC in September, 1995, the 35 member Workgroup is led by Vermont training coordinator Beth Dulac and NTC staffer Charlene Butler. Members represent federal, state, and local child support enforcement professionals, the courts, and private sector child support and training groups. "The Workgroup," Dulac says, "through its deliberations and through activities like the training needs assessment, gives states a voice which strengthens their partnership with OCSE in strategic planning."

Overall, the results of the assessment reflect a desire for "noncontent assistance," especially in technology such as Computer Based Training (CBT) and satellite based training. Once mastered, such approaches can be effectively used in delivering "content training" such as UIFSA, interviewing, new worker orientation, and paternity establishment. Most states now rely on traditional classroom training, supplemented by on-the-job efforts, to meet these training needs.

Another important finding: trainers would like to see the development of a materials and resources index. Although there is general consensus that resources, training curricula, and experts are in ready supply across the nation, there is no single place to which one can go to locate them. Also, OCSE's very successful Training of Trainers (TOT) course continues to be high on the list of state trainer "wants." Available for several years through NTC, TOT has been the source of formal introduction to training design and methodology for many of today's state trainers.

> *"The Workgroup . . . gives states a voice which strengthens their partnership with OCSE in strategic planning."*
>
> *Beth Dulac*

The most frequently listed training topics (aside from CBT, satellite, video conferencing, and TOT) were management, UIFSA, and conference coordination. Training categories rated as very important or important included: orientation for new workers, welfare reform, customer service, enforcement techniques, operations, supervisor training, interviewing skills, strategy planning, paternity establishment, and OCSE compliance/audit requirements. Some 50 percent of respondents indicated a desire for training in communications skills, customer service, management, team building, and interpersonal skills.

The preference for CBT and satellite technology found in this assessment parallels that of a recent study by the American Society of Training and Development, which cited a strong movement by trainers towards alternate delivery systems.

The National CSE Training Workgroup has now begun to develop initiatives to address the needs identified in the assessment. A meeting is tentatively planned for late April in Washington, DC, to review progress and consider next steps.

For further information about the Training Workgroup and a copy of the results of the needs assessment, contact OCSE's Charlene Butler at (202) 401-5091 or Vermont's Beth Dulac at (802) 241-2825.□

Illinois Child Support Enforcement Focuses on Young Children

For the past several years, Illinois' Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE), under its Administrator, Dianna Durham-McLoud, has focused attention on the needs of young children by celebrating the Week of the Young Child (April 13-19). During this special week, staff make a concerted effort to make information available that is of particular benefit to families with young children.

One way DCSE keeps involved with the early education community in Chicago is by sending speakers to meetings that deal specifically with the needs of young children. In January, for example, staff presented information on child support, work programs, and welfare reform requirements at the annual conference of the Chicago Metropolitan Association for the Education of Young Children.

> *"Our work in this area exemplifies the value of partners in human services working together for the well-being of the family."*
>
> *Dianna Durham-McLoud*

Many of the participants at this conference represented organizations serving low-income and moderate-income single mothers and their children. The passage of welfare reform made information about child support efforts to increase family income through the Illinois Work Pays Program and the Earned Income Tax Credit a top priority at this year's meeting.

"Our work in this area exemplifies the value of partners in human services working together for the well-being of the family," says DCSE Administrator Dianna Durham-McLoud. "As welfare reform becomes a reality, our efforts to help parents establish paternity and collect support can make a big difference in children's

success in school and in their ability to cope with the demands of today's world."

Early childhood educators are an ideal group for child support enforcement professionals to be in contact with since they are conversant with the needs of children and can get information into the hands of parents to help build strong families. And they are in an excellent position to promote paternity establishment.

The Illinois Head Start Association State Conference and the Chicago Head Start Parents' Forum gave DCSE staff further opportunity to tell educators of young children about child support services and to promote voluntary paternity acknowledgement. At the State conference, the response to the child support message was overwhelming: Every chair was occupied, and those who could not find a seat sat on the floor or stood throughout the two-hour presentation.

If you would like more information about DCSE's work with the early childhood education community in Illinois, contact Karen Newton-Matza at (312) 793-8223. □

LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR KIDS.
CHILD SUPPORT.

Incentive Funding Recommendations

By Tom Killmurray

A recommendation for a new incentive funding system for the Child Support Enforcement Program, developed by a workgroup of state and federal child support officials, has been sent to Congress by DHHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala. The workgroup's report includes performance standards that will determine the amount of incentive paid for each of five areas: paternity establishment, establishment of support orders, collection on current support, collections on arrearages, and cost effectiveness.

> *"Instead of rewarding states solely for their program's cost-effectiveness, we want to reward them for good performance on measures that assure support for children."*
>
> .....*DHHS Secretary Donna Shalala*

The recommended formula recognizes the importance of child support enforcement to family self-sufficiency by giving added value to collections states make for families who are on public assistance and families previously on public assistance.

"Instead of rewarding states solely for their program's cost-effectiveness," Secretary Shalala said, "we want to reward them for good performance on measures that assure support for children."

Why change the formula by which states receive incentive payments for child support enforcement? The current formula, enacted in 1984, provides a minimum incentive payment to all states based on the ratio of dollars collected to dollars expended. It has been criticized by Congress, advocacy groups and states for not providing incentives for states to produce the results required of today's child support enforcement programs.

Moreover, it emphasizes a traditional role of child support enforcement to recoup money paid out in public assistance by treating AFDC and nonAFDC collections differently. But the child support enforcement program has changed. Paternity establishment programs are now required of states, and services are provided to a broad spectrum of families in need of support.

The performance-based incentive funding system being recommended, by taking into account the five essential areas, would more accurately measure the true performance of the states' programs and their success in fostering family self-sufficiency.

An incentive funding formula that rewards performance strengthens the effort to fashion a results-oriented child support program for America. OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross cited the new proposal as "a blueprint for congressional action to further refine child support enforcement in the interest of bettering the lives of children and families."

Previous efforts by state and federal partners have produced a national strategic plan and performance measures that will indicate the success of the program. If Congress enacts the new incentive formula, the child support enforcement program will reward states that reach the agreed upon goals or make significant improvements in performance. Incentives will still be required to be shared among jurisdictions below the state level.

The new formula, if enacted into law, will be effective on October 1, 1999 and must be "revenue neutral:" That is, it must not exceed the cost of the current formula to the Federal Government.

An electronic copy of the Secretary's report to Congress is available on OCSE's Home Page on the World Wide Web at http:\\www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse. For more information, contact Tom Killmurray by e-mail at tkillmurray@acf.dhhs.gov or by phone at (202) 401-4677.□

Tom Killmurray is a Program Analyst in OCSE's Division of Policy and Planning.

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Partnering the Child Support Recovery Act

The Child Support Recovery Act of 1992 (CSRA) makes it a federal crime for a parent to willfully fail to pay support for a child living in another state. Since its passage, state child support enforcement agencies have been working with OCSE and the Department of Justice (DOJ) to coordinate implementation of the Act (see the January '95 and September '96 *CSR*).

In Rhode Island, the Division of Taxation/Child Support Enforcement (DOT/CSE), the State's child support enforcement agency, has been active in furthering an effective working relationship between child support and the U.S. Attorney's Office. The effort has borne fruit with the recent appointment of Sharon Ann Santilli, DOT/CSE's Chief Legal Counsel, as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, thus formalizing the relationship between the two offices.

The appointment, made by U.S. Attorney Sheldon Whitehouse, demonstrates the continued commitment to CSRA and full prosecution of CSRA cases on the part of DOJ and Rhode Island's child support agency.

Mr. Whitehouse stated that Ms. Santilli's appointment as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney would "strengthen the efforts of his office and Rhode Island's child support enforcement agency to bring to justice those parents who willfully fail to support their children living in another state."

Ms. Santilli began collaborating with the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1993 on the joint development of a referral form. All cases referred to DOJ by Rhode Island's DOT/CSE must be reviewed for accuracy and appropriateness by her office. Once referral is made, on-going communication is maintained between the two offices regarding the updating of information and status of cases.

The partnership already has resulted in successful prosecution of several cases. In one, the noncustodial parent paid $14,000 in arrears and fines and received one year of supervised release. In another case, the noncustodial parent was ordered to pay $200 a month in current support plus $100 towards an $18,000 arrearage and is also subject to supervised release. In a third case, the Federal Court upheld the CSRA against a constitutional challenge, and the case has now gone to trial. An indictment has been issued in a fourth case.

Sharon Ann Santilli speaks following swearing-in as Special Assistant U.S. Attorney. U.S. Attorney Sheldon Whitehouse looks on.

Altogether, some fifteen Rhode Island cases are currently being investigated by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Attending a recent DOJ conference on prosecution of cases under CSRA, at which Attorney General Janet Reno addressed the group, Ms. Santilli said there is "no question that Attorney General Reno means to see that CSRA is vigorously enforced. She advised that these cases are a priority of her Department and stated her support in the strongest possible terms."

If you would like more information on Rhode Island's efforts to enforce the Child Support Recovery Act, contact Sharon A. Santilli at (401) 277-3845. □

This article was written by Carol Monteiro, an OCSE Program Specialist in ACF's Region I (Boston) Office.

1997 Conference Calendar

The Calendar is printed quarterly in *CSR* in January, April, July, and October. If you are planning a meeting or conference and would like for it to be included in the Calendar, please call OCSE's Bertha Hammett at (202) 401-5292 or fax her at (202) 401-5559.

The Calendar is accessible through the Federal OCSE web site under the "News" section:
http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/ACFPrograms/CSE/index.html
The listing is also available on the OCSE Section of ACF's Bulletin Board at (800) 627-8886.

April

23-25 North Carolina Child Support Enforcement Council Conference, Raleigh Plaza, Raleigh, NC, Barry Miller (919) 571-4114 X219.

29-May 2 North Dakota Family Support Council Training Conference, Seven Seas Hotel, Mandan, ND, Coby Barstad (701) 662-5374.

May

4-8 Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association (ERICSA), Buffalo, NY, Mary Ann Nore (419) 774-5731.

6-9 California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting, Red Lion Hotel, Sacramento, CA, Noanne J. St. Jean (209) 624-8180.

9 West Virginia CSE Division Teleconference Series '97: Child Support Orders Against Military and Government Employees, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV, Gretchen Lewis (304) 558-3780.

June

4-6 IV-D Directors' Annual Conference, Des Moines, IA, Janet Zeutenhorst (515) 281-6737.

6 West Virginia CSE Division Teleconference Series '97: Legislative Update, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV, Gretchen Lewis (304) 558-3780.

9-11 Colorado Family Support Council Training Conference, Doubletree Antlers Hotel, Colorado Springs, CO, Ken Wimmer (303) 727-2699.

10-11 Drake University Legal Clinic, Des Moines, IA, Carol Downs (816) 426-3584, ext. 156.

11-13 Indiana Annual Training Conference, Bloomington, IN, J. Michael Loomis (219) 449-7244.

17-19 Lasting Connections Conference on Parenthood, Tan-Tar-A Resort, Lake of the Ozarks, MO, Marla Ashley (573) 751-4301.

July

8-11 California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting, Catamaran Resort Hotel, San Diego, CA, Noanne J. St. Jean (209) 624-8180.

August

1 West Virginia CSE Division Teleconference Series '97: Enforcement Strategies, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV, Gretchen Lewis (304) 558-3780.

24-28 National Child Support Enforcement Association's 46th Annual Training Conference and Exposition, Scottsdale Princess Hotel, Phoenix, AZ, Heather Tonks (202) 624-8180.

September

30-October 2 Western Interstate CSE Council on Welfare Reform: New and Proven Techniques for Effective Enforcement, Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish, MT, Bruce Kaspari (916) 323-5662.

October

28-31 California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting, Hyatt Regency Alicant, Anaheim, CA, Noanne J. St. Jean (209) 584-1425. □

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Child Support Report

Expanded FPLS Workgroup Meeting

OCSE's Workgroup on the Expanded Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS) met in Baltimore, Maryland, March 17-19 to gather input from states on systems design for the Federal Case Registry.

The Expanded FPLS includes a National Directory of New Hires, as well as the Federal Case Registry, described by some as "the heart of the system." (See March '97 *CSR*.)

Representatives from State Employment Service Agencies (SESAs) and the Department of Labor joined federal, state, and local child support officials in the meeting.

The group reviewed progress on the National New Hire Directory, analyzed data elements for the Federal Case Registry, and charted the handling of locate requests in the future FPLS environment.

"Knowing how busy state SESA and child support staff are just now," said Karen Bartlett, who coordinated the meeting, "we really appreciate their willingness to take part."

For more information contact OCSE's Karen Bartlett at (202) 401-4630.☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement **Vol. XIX, No. 5, May 1997**

Ohio Child Support Project Assists Women in Prison

By: John A. Popio

For the past several years, Union County's (Ohio) Department of Human Services has been involved with other service providers in the women's health and social service fairs at the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW). Staff counseled inmates about employment and training programs, financial assistance, child care, and child support enforcement (CSE) services.

Nearly 9 out of 10 women at ORW have children under 18 years of age, and this was reflected in questions CSE staff were frequently asked, such as: How do I get support from the child's father? How do I get my child back when I'm released? How do I find a job and earn enough to provide a home for my children?

These women were unaware of the community based services that were available to them, and we realized that working with them while they were at ORW would provide us an excellent opportunity to get a head start on services they would need upon release.

In setting up the ORW Child Support Project, our idea was to have a trained, experienced CSE staff person available on a full-time basis to work with the ORW women. Duties would include establishing paternity, setting support and pursuing enforcement, and acting as a liaison for referring cases for action to the local CSE agency.

ORW's Warden, Shirley A. Rogers, and her staff quickly agreed with the proposal. Said Union County Director, John A. Popio, "Correction officials were eager to cooperate in any way they could." An arrangement was made to share funding among Ohio's Departments of Human Services, and Rehabilitation and Correction, and the local CSE agency.

L. to r., John Popio, Cindy Skoloda, and Deborah Hempy

In July, 1996, Cindy Skoloda, an experienced child support specialist, was assigned as Project Coordinator. Because she would be working regularly within the correctional facility, she received the core training provided to all Department of Rehabilitation and Correction staff. "This enabled her," said Deborah Hempy, ORW project site supervisor, "to understand how the correctional facility operates and use that knowledge in planning how child support services could most effectively be extended to the inmate population."

Case responsibility for child support activity in Ohio is determined by residency of the child and whether or not a court order is in effect. When a

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

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My View

David Gray Ross

A new report from the National Center for Health Statistics, "Health and Selected Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Family: U.S., 1988-90," by John Gary Collins and Felicia B. LeClere, examines the relationship between health status and family characteristics. Among its findings: Children living with a single parent or adult report a higher prevalence of activity limitation, higher rates of disability, and are more likely to be in poor health and to have been hospitalized.

Evidence, it would seem, continues to accumulate documenting the difficulties faced by children in single parent households, the vast majority of which are headed by women. We know that the standard of living for a woman with custody of the children is reduced following a divorce and that never-married women with children have a difficult time financially.

These families struggle much harder than two-parent families to make ends meet. That's why the regular receipt of child support is so important. It can make a real difference in managing food, shelter, clothing, medical, and dental expenses.

Yet we have made solid progress in collecting child support and establishing paternities. In 1992 we collected $8 billion; in 1996, $12 billion—a 50 percent increase. During this time, paternity establishments increased from 500,000 in 1992 to 900,000 in 1996. And we're learning from research that the income from child support may be more beneficial to children than other sources of family income. Some researchers are finding that regular child support is linked to more years of school attendance, increases in grade point averages, and reductions in behavior problems.

So, during this Mother's Day season, let us set aside dispiriting findings for a moment to recognize and honor those women who struggle to be both parents to their children, many of whom are doing an outstanding job in very demanding circumstances.

Though the idea of setting aside a day to honor mothers might seem to have ancient roots, our observance of Mother's Day is less than a century old. It originated in 1908 with the efforts of a devoted West Virginia daughter and schoolteacher, Anna Jarvis. Early in 1914, both houses of Congress approved legislation giving mothers their special day, and on May 8 President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

Happy Mother's Day to all!□

FYI: Hispanics

Twenty-seven million Hispanics in the U.S. comprise over 10 percent of the population. But there is no single Hispanic or Latino culture in the U.S. Rather, "country of origin, recency of immigration, and geographical location in the U.S. contribute to the cultural diversity within the Hispanic population."

Hispanics are concentrated in a small number of states. A national perspective, therefore, which aggregates information from all 50 states, is unlikely to accurately reflect the needs of Latino families and children in areas where they are concentrated.

More than 77 percent of the Latino population is in five states.

For analysis and planning purposes, the national percentage needs to be disaggregated by state in order to obtain valid numbers and characteristics. For example, more than 77 percent of the Latino population, including 74 percent of Hispanic children, is in five states (numbers are in millions):

- **California**, 9.95 (37 percent);
- **Texas**, 5.24 (19 percent);
- **New York**, 2.34 (9 percent);
- **Florida**, 2.13 (8 percent); and
- **Illinois**, 1.19 (4 percent).

In those five states 57 percent are concentrated in eight metropolitan/urban areas:

- **Los Angeles, Anaheim, Riverside, CA**, 6.34;
- **New York, Long Island, NY and NJ**, 3.18;
- **Miami, Fort Lauderdale, FL**, 1.30;
- **Chicago, Gary, Lake City, IL/IN/WI**, 1.15;
- **San Francisco, Oakland, CA**, 1.09;
- **Houston, Galveston, TX**, 0.85;
- **Dallas, Fort Worth, TX**, 0.83; and
- **San Antonio, TX**, 0.67.

For more information, contact Vilma Gorena Guinn of OCSE's Division of Consumer Services at (202) 401-5355.□

Source: "Hispanics—Latinos: Diverse People in a Multicultural Society, a Special Report," National Association of Hispanic Publications, Washington, DC (Based on 1995 Special Census Reports).

Child Support and Economic Well-Being Following an Exit from AFDC

By: Daniel R. Meyer and Maria Cancian

In their paper, a report submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, summarized below, Meyer and Cancian use data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, a nationally representative survey that includes over five thousand civilian women aged 14 to 21 in 1979 and for whom annual data are available through 1992. The analysis is based on a sample of 637 women for whom at least five years of post-AFDC exit data are available.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform) eliminates the open-ended entitlement to cash welfare for single-parent families under AFDC, replacing it with a program (TANF) that requires work and places time limits on benefits. In this context, the potential for other income sources, including child support, to supplement a custodial parent's earnings is particularly crucial. In this report, we consider the impact of child support on economic well-being after welfare among young women.

Some previous research has examined the relationship between child support and welfare use. In a study of divorced women in Wisconsin, Meyer (1993) found that relatively few women were enabled to leave AFDC because of child support; for most women the amount of child support paid was much smaller than the amount of their AFDC grant. This modest effect of child support on AFDC receipt has also been found in simulation models of national data covering all custodial mothers.

Although child support seems to have a limited impact on the likelihood of leaving AFDC, a much larger effect has been found on the likelihood of returning to AFDC once women have exited. Meyer (1993) found that receiving any amount of child support decreased the likelihood of Wisconsin divorced women returning to AFDC. Women who did not receive child support, for example, had a 31 percent chance of returning to welfare within the first six months. In contrast, women who received as little as $1 - $100 a month in child support had only a 10 percent chance of returning to AFDC.

Also, Sandfort and Hill (1996), in examining later-life income among women who had a nonmarital child when they were aged 16 - 22, found the amount of child support received by a young woman in her child's first years of life to be positively related to her level of self-sufficiency when the child reached age 5 - 7.

Table 1, below, examines all who exit and shows that median incomes increase over the first five years following an exit from welfare, from about $10,500 in the first year to about $15,000 in year five (1992 constant dollars). But relatively few women (around 17 - 19 percent) received child support. (The table shows child support/alimony, but the alimony figures for this

Continued on page 7

TABLE 1
Income Sources for Women Exiting AFDC

Median Family Income	Period 1 $10,533		Period 2 $11,972		Period 3 $12,750		Period 4 $13,751		Period 5 $14,875	
	% > 0	Med. $ > 0	% > 0	Med. $ > 0	% > 0	Med. $ > 0	% > 0	Med. $ > 0	% > 0	Med. $ > 0
Child Support/Alimony	17.7	1,454	17.0	1,163	18.0	1,350	16.6	1,131	18.9	1,482
Respondent's Earnings	59.7	5,509	64.3	5,558	59.3	7,292	60.1	7,925	63.9	8,961
Respondent's Unemployment	6.7	768	6.4	930	6.2	1,828	5.2	1,252	5.7	984
Partner/Spouse's Income	42.3	14,086	43.3	14,929	42.1	17,290	43.6	18,905	40.2	18,975
VA/Workers' Comp/Disability	3.8	1,087	2.5	409	4.3	1,163	5.0	2,135	6.2	2,399
AFDC	28.7	2,186	38.0	3,614	35.9	3,843	34.1	3,864	33.2	4,030
Food Stamps	49.3	1,519	48.6	1,630	43.9	2,000	40.4	1,859	40.2	2,161
SSI/Public Assistance	16.9	3,367	8.8	4,298	8.8	3,970	6.5	1,944	5.1	3,736
Other Sources	10.0	77	11.8	128	11.7	130	12.1	160	12.1	203
Percentage with Total Income > 0	97.4		99.2		98.9		99.2		98.6	

Source: Authors' calculations using NLSY data

Sample: Women who exited AFDC for whom five years of post-exit family income data are available. (Unweighted n = 637.)

Note: All dollar amounts are in 1992 constant dollars.

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Women and Men: Seeing Hope

An Interview with Gallaudet's Jamey A. Piland

With the passage of welfare reform, issues such as access and visitation, domestic violence, and others of potential controversy between women and men have become more prominent in the child support enforcement arena. On April 4, 1997, Sara K. Schlank, on behalf of *CSR*, spoke with Dr. Jamey A. Piland, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Arts at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, and adjunct faculty at the George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, about relations between the sexes. Dr. Piland, an expert in personal relationships, gender, organizational communication, and conflict management, received her Ph.D. in Communications from the University of Oregon.

Jamey Piland

CSR: *Dr. Piland, we hear a lot these days about troubled relations between women and men. Are there any bright spots?*

DJP: I like this question because I think that we often talk about where we are having difficulties in relationships between men and women. This can cause us to lose sight of what is valuable. But it also predisposes us to a negative view when, as I see it, events are moving in a very positive direction. The fact that there is public dialogue about personal relationships centered around social, cultural, and gender differences is a very strong proof of that, although not one often remarked on. We all know that, as a rule, it's healthier for us as individuals to talk about what's bothering us, to let others know what we're concerned about. And that's certainly the case in our relationships with others of the opposite sex. I think people are able to talk about what goes on in relationships, more so than they did ten or twenty years ago. We see this in the public dialogue about relationships between men and women, a dialogue going on at all levels of society and touching all sorts of institutions from educational to religious, to social, to judicial. Not all of the dialogue is as productive as we might wish, and much of it concerns issues that are not easily resolvable. But the important point is that it's taking place.

CSR: *So, you would not agree with the assessment, made by some, that when it comes to problems between the sexes we've become a nation of victims and whiners who have no intention of finding solutions?*

DJP: No, I couldn't agree with that. First, I don't think words like "victims" and "whiners" are very useful in resolving problems. Second, one of the reasons for the public dialogue on this issue, in my opinion, is that, as a society, we have had to acknowledge that relationships are difficult and that through relationships people get hurt—sometimes badly. And the disturbances from those hurts ripple throughout society. Third, falling back on labels such as "victims" and "whiners" patronizes women and reduces the significance of their struggles. It's unfortunate, but as soon as any social issue is raised we seem to look for ways to trivialize it. When we attach stigma to gender we diminish the importance of underlying issues, and this only works to the disadvantage of both women and men in coming to an understanding of those issues and being able to do something about them.

CSR: *We used to say that parents who were having problems should stay together for the sake of the kids. Now we say that divorced parents should*

behave maturely and responsibly with each other for the sake of the children. What do you see happening?

DJP: We are seeing a much more present role of the father today when looking at heterosexual couples in parenting and in coparenting after divorce, and that's a positive. We see men and women using the resources that are available to cooperate with one another in the best interests of their children. Of course we see problems, too; I'm not suggesting that everything is fine, only that there's more of a willingness on the part of both women and men to look at the problems, talk about them, and try to find mutually satisfying solutions. I see this as very hopeful. I think people are working very well with the resources they have, and they are achieving success through cooperation. The children are very important or these high levels of cooperation wouldn't exist. We wouldn't have this arrangement called shared custody, where divorced couples agree to set aside their conflicts and do what is best for their children. It's not easy, and it strikes a very positive note. In the recent past, often it was more or less understood that after a divorce, the father's involvement with the children would decrease—whether or not he was a good father. Now there is an increase in the presence of divorced fathers in coparenting and wanting to share in the nurturing of their children. Societal pressures around child support may well have contributed to this, but that doesn't make it any less admirable. And I think this increase of fathers' interest and time in the lives of the children is welcomed by mothers. Here you have two people saying, in effect, "Okay, this relationship isn't working; we can't live in the same house, but we're going to find a way to meet our children's needs."

CSR: *You mention that men are getting more interested in the nurturing parent role, moving in, perhaps, on an area that, until recently, was reserved for women. In your view, how do women feel about this?*

DJP: Not everyone is going to respond in the same way, but for the most part I think women welcome the opportunities that shared custody and shared nurturing bring—both in terms of the relationship with their former partner and in terms of the relationship with the children.

CSR: *I recall an article in which the author (a man I believe) argued that men's behavior can be shaped in positive ways by women's expectations . . .*

DJP: I would not want to go so far as to say that a man's behavior can be "controlled" by a woman's expectations, or vice versa—I doubt that your author would go that far either. But there is research that suggests that our responses to each other as men and women are based on social expectations regarding gender. Conflict research, for example, suggests that there is not a substantial difference in the ways that women and men respond to conflict; but there is a big difference in the ways that men and women are perceived in conflict. And it's based on gender expectations—that women are going to respond to conflict in certain ways, while men are going to respond in other ways. The way we socially construct gender seems to provide us with "lenses" that help us "see" what we expect to see. What seems important here is to be able to articulate these socially constructed expectations, to figure out where they came from in order to change and adjust them, if that's what is needed.

CSR: *In terms of what we know from research, what do divorced mothers want from the children's fathers?*

DJP: In addition to receiving support—financially and emotionally—I think that mothers want the same things they want from any close relationship. Being present in the lives of the children; cooperation; a feeling of being listened to and having a say in decisions; some level of understanding, of being acknowledged and valued; and trust. These make a very solid foundation.

CSR: *Thank you.*□

This interview with Dr. Piland was conducted and transcribed by Ms. Sara K. Schlank, a student in Sociology and in the Women's Studies Program at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia.

MilitaryWithholding

Child support enforcement cases involving military personnel can sometimes be a challenge for caseworkers. Sheck Chin, OCSE's Military Liaison Officer, responds to numerous questions on establishing and enforcing child support against personnel in the military. Here are two recent questions which may be of interest.

Q: *Why does the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) in Cleveland return wage withholding orders not sent by certified mail?*

A: Before passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform) the Social Security Act (section 459b) required that service of process for the enforcement of an individual's obligation to provide child support payments be accomplished by certified or registered mail with return receipt requested, or by personal service. Under welfare reform this requirement is removed. As of February 23, 1997, DFAS began to accept service of process for wage withholding by regular mail and by fax. For a listing of fax numbers, contact the DFAS customer service desk at (216) 522-5301.

Q: *Garnishment checks for the military are sent out once a month. But sometimes our office receives two child support checks from DFAS in the same month. Why?*

A: Wage withholding for active duty military are prepared and mailed on the first of the month after the month from which the money was garnished. The military pay system is programmed so that when payday falls on a weekend or holiday checks are mailed on the business day before the holiday or weekend. The chart below shows that for 1997 child support enforcement agencies will receive two checks in the months of May, August, October, and December.

Month of Deduction	1997 Paydays
January	Friday, January 31
February	Friday, February 28
March	Tuesday, April 1
April	Thursday, May 1
May	Friday, May 30
June	Tuesday, July 1
July	Friday, August 1
August	Friday, August 29
September	Wednesday, October 1
October	Friday, October 31
November	Monday, December 1
December	Wednesday, December 31

If you have questions about military withholding, call OCSE's Military Liaison Officer, Sheck Chin, at (202) 260-5830.□

Mother's Day Facts

- In 1993, 73.9 million of the Nation's 103.4 million women 15 years old and over were mothers.
- Of the 73.9 million mothers, 23 percent had given birth to one child during their lifetimes, 35 percent to two children, 21 percent to three, 11 percent to four, and 10 percent to five or more.
- Of 22.8 million never-married women 15 to 44 years old in 1995, 21 percent were mothers.
- In 1995, there were nearly 10 million single mothers with children under 18.□

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Poverty Guidelines

Newly updated DHHS poverty guidelines for the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia, effective March 10, 1997, continue to show how important it is for noncustodial parents to make regular child support enforcement payments to their families. Regular receipt of child support could boost the total income of many families above the poverty guideline. For a family of 1, the poverty guideline is $7,890; for:

2	$10,610
3	13,330
4	16,050
5	18,770
6	21,490
7	24,210
8	26,930.

For family units with more than 8 members, add $2,720 for each additional member.□

Women in prison

Continued from page 1

mother is incarcerated there often seems to be less urgency in addressing paternity and other child support issues. The objective of this project is to assure that appropriate child support activities are initiated and, if possible, completed while incarcerated mothers are being prepared for release.

"Participation is voluntary, but the response has been overwhelming," says Skoloda. The project provides case management, referral, and advocacy to assure that critical time is not wasted and that these mothers and their families receive the child support services they need. Lorah Pittman, an ORW inmate in the project, speaks for many when she says: "I am glad that I can get things going on child support . . . I'm determined to make the best of my time here . . . to do this time and not let the time do me."

A tracking and reporting system has been developed and each local CSE agency has identified a contact person to work with Ms. Skoloda. In February, 1997, the collection of child support information at ORW Admissions began. A project oversight team meets each month to monitor progress and provide direction. And, already, planning is underway to expand the project to include employability issues.

"I'm determined to make the best of my time here."

.....ORW inmate, Lorah Pittman.

State CSE officials have become increasingly aware of the necessity to work closely with the correction system. A recent computer match compared Ohio's 45,650 inmates and 11,569 parolees with the State's IV-D Parent Locator Services. There were 1,085 matches, which indicated that nearly 2 percent of Ohio's correction systems population is linked in some way to, or is, a child support case.

Information about the project can be obtained by contacting Cindy Skoloda, Project Coordinator, at (937) 642-1065, X 2115.□

John A. Popio is Director of the Union County (Ohio) Department of Human Services.

Economic well-being after AFDC

Continued from page 3

study are negligible.) Among those who did receive support, the median amounts were under $1,500, with some fluctuations over time.

Women receiving any amount of child support are less likely to return to AFDC.

The vast majority of the young women who left AFDC, 65 percent, never received child support in the first five years after exiting. Another 13 percent received support in one year only, with about one-third of these receiving it only in the first year. Just five percent received child support in every year. The women who did receive support in each year, however, were among those who achieved modest levels of economic well-being.

This research shows that child support had a limited effect on economic self-sufficiency following an exit from AFDC for this group of young women, many of whom had never been married. Relatively few of these women received child support, and of those who did, levels were low. However, evidence is cited that women receiving any amount of support are less likely to return to AFDC; that support received by a young woman in the first years of a child's life is positively related to her later self-sufficiency; and that women who received support in each of the first five years after exiting AFDC were among those who achieved modest levels of economic well-being. In addition, Meyer and Cancian suggest that the role of child support in achieving self-sufficiency may now be larger under welfare reform. CSR will look at their reasons for thinking so in the next issue.□

Daniel R. Meyer is an Associate Professor of Social Work and an Affiliate of the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin—Madison. Maria Cancian is an Assistant Professor of Public Affairs and Social Work and an Affiliate of the Institute for Research on Poverty and the Center for Demography and Ecology, also at Wisconsin—Madison.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Child Support Report

AFDC/TANF Update: Caseload Continues Downward Trend

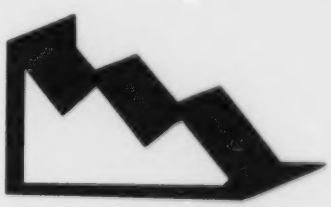
The national welfare caseload continued its downward trend through December, 1996, according to a report issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, with 4.143 million families receiving benefits.

This compares to 4.4 million receiving benefits as of June, 1996 (see October '96 *CSR*).

Altogether, between January, 1993, and December, 1996, the number of families receiving benefits decreased by 820,000, or 17 percent, while the number of recipients decreased by 2,619,000, or 19 percent.

At the state level, all but four states saw reductions in their caseloads ranging from 2 percent in Connecticut to 47 percent in Wisconsin.

Three of the four "net gain" states showed modest increases: Alaska 1 percent, California 3 percent, and the District of Columbia 4 percent, while Hawaii gained 20 percent during the period. ☐



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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement | Vol. XIX, No. 6, June 1997

Parenting and Paternity Alliance in Missouri

Public and Private Agencies Pursue a Common Goal

By: Pam Schantz Rich and Patricia Cullen

The Parenting and Paternity Alliance (PAPA) project (Missouri Division of Child Support Enforcement) illustrates how partnerships can improve services to customers. Formed in response to the call for Government Performance and Results Act projects, PAPA has brought together public and private agencies in pursuit of a common goal: fostering a community environment in which parents can feel that acknowledging paternity and/or assuming parental responsibility is the right thing to do.

The primary target populations are parents who do not live with their children and young people who are at risk of becoming parents.

The state-level partners (see Box on page 2) have taken responsibility for: (1) training and educating themselves and other service providers about the importance of including both parents in their service delivery; (2) developing a statewide media campaign; and (3) utilizing the resources and services of PAPA partners in the community for the benefit of their mutual customers.

Participants commit their resources and energies to specific projects and work activities as outlined in a Partnership Agreement. Sample PAPA activities include:

- The Missouri Division of Child Support/PAPA first Statewide Parenthood Conference, held June 17 - 19;
- Two father-friendly brochures, designed, written, printed, and distributed by PAPA: "For Dad's Who Don't Live with Their Kids," and "Fathers Figure."
- Public Service Announcements on statewide television depicting the importance of father involvement in kids' lives–produced with the National Center on Fathering, the Department of Mental Health, and with the assistance of inmates at the Jefferson City Correctional Facility of Missouri's Department of Corrections; and
- Parenting classes for incarcerated fathers who are soon-to-be released and for fathers on probation–with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the National Parents as Teachers, the Department of Corrections, and the Division of Probation and Parole.

The PAPA project illustrates how partnerships can improve services to customers.

Local PAPAs are starting to appear all across the State, and in the long run these will be the life-blood for many who need assistance in

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
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Office of Child Support Enforcement

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becoming better parents to their children. Community by community, we are beginning to see PAPA's participant organizations talking with each other, sharing resources, and thinking about new ways to provide coordinated services to their mutual clients.

For more information, contact the PAPA Coordinator, Pam Schantz Rich, at (573) 751-5958. □

PAPA Partners

A sampling of organizations that have entered into PAPA partnerships:

- Missouri Association for Community Action
- Missouri Association of Local Public Health Agencies
- Missouri Department of Corrections
- Missouri Hospital Association
- Missouri Primary Health Care Coalition
- AFL/CIO State Labor Council
- Consortium on Survivability of the Afro-American Male
- Department of Health and Mental Health
- Federal Administration for Children and Families (Region VII)
- Head Start
- Nurses for Newborns
- Planned Parenthood. □

Pam Schantz Rich is Program Manager of Missouri's Division of Child Support Enforcement. Patricia Cullen is a Children and Families Program Specialist in ACF's Regional Office in Kansas City.

Action Transmittals

An Action Transmittal (AT) has its basis in federal law and regulation and, as the name implies, instructs state child support enforcement programs on the actions they must take to comply with new and amended federal laws. To date, eight ATs have been released in 1997. These are:

OCSE-AT-97-01, 1-6-97, the calculation and recoupment of the federal share of child support collections made on behalf of children in foster care;

OCSE-AT-97-02, 2-10-97, revised instructions for requesting an exemption from the mandatory laws and procedures in section 466 of the Social Security Act;

OCSE-AT-97-03, 3-6-97, distribution of federally approved interstate child support enforcement forms: order/notice to withhold income for child support, interstate subpoena, and notice of interstate lien;

OCSE-AT-97-04, 3-12-97, policy questions and responses regarding the National Directory of New Hires and the State Directory of New Hires;

OCSE-AT-97-05, 4-28-97, procedures for determining that a state IV-D plan is disapproved;

OCSE-AT-97-06, 5-2-97, distribution of federally approved standard interstate child support enforcement forms packet–includes matrix, glossary, transmittals, petition, etc.;

OCSE-AT-97-07, 5-15-97, instructions for requesting an exemption from the mandatory state plan provision in section 454(27) of the Social Security Act; and

OCSE-AT-97-08, 5-14-97, the elimination of FFP at the 90 percent rate for ADP costs, effective October 1, 1997, and the treatment of contractual holdback payments after that date.

For copies of ATs call OCSE's National Reference Center at (202) 401-9383. □

Procedures Regarding State Plans

On April 28, 1997, OCSE issued Action Transmittal OCSE-AT-97-05, "Procedures for Determining That A State IV-D Plan Is Disapproved." This program instruction, an update to procedures originally issued in 1986 (OCSE-AT-96-21), details the steps which OCSE will take if a state fails to enact conforming legislation implementing the new state plan requirements contained in Title III of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform).

If a state fails to submit conforming state plan amendments by the required effective date, OCSE will have to determine that the state does not have an approvable state plan. Such a determination will result in immediate suspension of all federal payments for the state's child support enforcement program, and such payments will continue to be withheld until the state IV-D plan can be approved. □

Happy Father's Day!

Child Support and Economic Well-Being Following an Exit from AFDC

By: Daniel R. Meyer and Maria Cancian

Part II: Child Support Under Welfare Reform

In May, CSR reported Meyer and Cancian concluding that, for young women, child support has had a limited effect on economic self-sufficiency following an exit from AFDC. They suggested, however, that the role of child support in achieving self-sufficiency may be larger under welfare reform, depending partly on choices states make.

Several factors suggest that the overall current role of child support in achieving self-sufficiency may be larger under welfare reform.

Our data examined welfare use and later economic well-being only among young women. Child support may be more important as an income source following welfare among a group of middle-aged women. In 1991, custodial mothers aged 18 - 29 who received child support received an average of $1,816, compared to $3,127 among mothers in their 30s who received child support.

Several factors suggest that the overall current role of child support in achieving self-sufficiency may be larger under welfare reform.

In our study, we examined welfare use and later economic well-being among a national sample of young women who exited AFDC between 1979 and 1987. Substantial reforms have occurred within the child support system since this time. Because most of these changes have been designed to increase the amount of child support collected, an examination of the current importance of child support may show a larger effect.

Welfare reform changes the treatment of child support within the welfare system and gives states the option of determining the relationship of child support and welfare. Under AFDC, women receiving child support and AFDC retained only the first $50/month paid (with any amounts over $50/month going to offset AFDC costs). Some ethnographic research has suggested that these child support rules discouraged some custodial mothers from cooperating with the child support system.

Welfare reform ended federal sharing in the cost of the pass-through, leaving it to state discretion whether or not to pass through any amount of child support collected and if so, how to treat the income to the family in the new program. Wisconsin has announced a plan to pass through the entire amount of child support to custodial mothers. To the extent that the old system discouraged cooperation, this reform may increase cooperation, encouraging individuals to work through the formal system, which may then result in child support having larger and more lasting effects on their economic well-being. On the other hand, if a state were to eliminate the pass-through altogether, cooperation could decrease and lead to child support having a limited effect on later economic well-being.

The limited effects found in this study, and reported in last month's *CSR*, of child support on economic well-being after leaving AFDC, then, do not necessarily mean that, under welfare reform, child support will be unimportant to the economic well-being of women in similar circumstances. □

Daniel R. Meyer is an Associate Professor of Social Work and an Affiliate of the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Maria Cancian is an Assistant Professor of Public Affairs and Social Work and an Affiliate of the Institute for Research on Poverty and the Center for Demography and Ecology, also at Wisconsin–Madison.

LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR KIDS.
CHILD SUPPORT.

Fathers and the Payment of Child Support

By: Ross A. Thompson

Fathers who do not visit with their children are less likely to pay child support, but this may be because fathers who refuse to pay child support lack the commitment to visit regularly with offspring or because fathers who encounter obstacles to visitation feel less fidelity to child support orders.

It is also true that fathers who cannot maintain child support payments are likely to otherwise disappear from their children's lives, either because they wish to avoid detection, or because they are denied access by the children's mother, or because they cannot justify visiting offspring whom they cannot help support.

When mothers remarry, fathers sometimes feel excluded from their children's lives and may believe there is less need for child support payments now that a stepfather is in the picture. Or the father's own remarriage may diminish his interest in visitation and his perception of his capacity to pay child support. The geographic relocation of either parent can have similar consequences.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, although unfortunately, fathers too often show inconsistent and faltering fidelity to child support orders in a manner similar to their declining visitation with offspring. What factors can account for whether fathers will maintain fidelity to their child support obligations? One set of explanations focuses on child support in the context of the maintenance of other parenting responsibilities toward children: fathers are more likely to provide reliable child support when they have other meaningful roles in the child's life.

Judith Seltzer and her colleagues have argued that, just as fathers in intact homes expect to spend time with children, provide for their material needs, and exercise authority over them, so also divorced fathers define their parenting roles in terms of these three responsibilities. Thus, a father's fidelity to child support obligations should be regarded within the context of the other commitments and responsibilities that define a father's post-divorce parenting role.

A father's maintenance of child support is also affected by the geographic distance between fathers and offspring (child support is more forthcoming when the father and children live in close proximity), and the quality of the relationship between the ex-spouses.

Custody arrangements may also be pertinent to a father's capacity to maintain a sense of involvement with offspring. A higher proportion of fathers in joint custody maintain their child support obligations than fathers in other custody arrangements, and they are also more likely to provide children with other benefits not included in support payments.

Thus, if Seltzer is correct, child support is part of an overall constellation of obligations to children that noncustodial fathers either feel committed to or tend to default on. Visitation and custody arrangements that foster fathers' perception of a meaningful parenting role are likely to enhance their fidelity to child support obligations.

The father's financial capacity to provide reliable child support is another factor. More than 60 percent of the women due child support, but not receiving regular payments, cite the father's inability to pay as the cause. Although many fathers who default on child support obligations are fully capable of making regular payments, a number of studies indicate that one of the best predictors of the amount of child support provided by fathers is their income and employment status.

Lower-income fathers have fewer resources for satisfying their support obligations, but also their child support payments typically constitute a higher proportion of their income, they have fewer ancillary resources on which to draw if they should fall behind in

their support payments, and they are more aggressively prosecuted for failing in their support obligations (partly because they are already involved with social service agencies and can less easily frustrate child support enforcement efforts).

Taken together, these factors suggest that support compliance can best be predicted by general financial circumstances and/or the kind of parenting role fathers achieve in their post-divorce lives.

Even when they refuse or cannot comply with their support obligations, however, most fathers accept their general responsibility for doing so and affirm the legitimacy of their children's post-divorce economic needs. As Haskins, who has studied these fathers, has commented, "I find no support in the empirical literature for either the claim that fathers believe child support to be unjustified or that they accept the validity of various reasons often cited as justifications for not paying child support. Fathers know they have an obligation to pay child support and that this obligation cannot easily be broken."

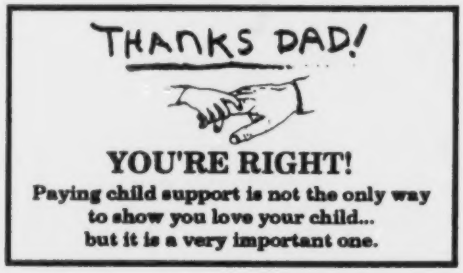
A number of studies indicate that one of the best predictors of the amount of child support provided by fathers is their income and employment status.

The dilemma of fathers and divorce centers on the challenges inherent in contemporary paternity: a status whose defining characteristics have become blurred by changes in men's and women's roles in our society and whose redefinition is still to come. As a consequence, paternity has become unfortunately (but perhaps inevitably) defined in popular forums by what is lacking: the assumption of responsibility for children, an equal sharing with women of domestic responsibilities, and a willingness to invest relationally as well as economically.

At the same time, contemporary portrayals of fatherhood, including those associated with divorce, continue to emphasize their economic support obligations and their alleged disinterest in–and inadequacy for–child care. It is in this context of conflicting and largely denigrating cultural images that men seek to redefine fatherhood for themselves, both in marriage and in post-marital life.□

From The Future of Children, *a publication of the Center for the Future of Children, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Abstracted, with permission, from Ross Thompson's article, "The Role of the Father After Divorce," published in* The Future of Children, *Volume 4, Number 1, Spring, 1994.*

Ross A. Thompson, Ph.D., is professor of psychology and associate director of the Center on Children, Families, and the Law at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.



NFL Fatherhood Campaign Update

The number of National Football League (NFL) teams working with state child support enforcement (CSE) agencies on the CSE Fatherhood Campaign continues to grow. The initial teams included the Detroit Lions (see February '96 *CSR*), Jacksonville Jaguars, Miami Dolphins, New England Patriots, New York Giants, Oakland Raiders, and Tampa Bay Buccaneers. (Major League Baseball also is showing interest. The Chicago Cubs have a Fatherhood Campaign–see January '97 *CSR*.)

Based upon a recent presentation to the NFL public relations/community relations directors, other NFL teams are expected to join the campaign. The nation's child support community was praised at the NFL meeting for developing the idea and for its energy and commitment to the campaign. As more teams join, *CSR* will keep you informed.□

CSE Joins Partners with Law Enforcement in Washington State

By: Melanie Watters

As a Support Enforcement Officer (SEO) in Washington State's Division of Child Support (DCS), I deal occasionally with cases in which the seizure of drug money is involved. I recently developed a program related to this type of case. It started with a routine case in which a noncustodial parent was arrested on drug charges. In making the arrest, drug task force officials seized a large sum of money, in addition to drugs.

Subsequently, however, the task force's search warrant was ruled invalid, which meant that the money would have to be returned to the noncustodial parent. I contacted task force officials and documented that DCS had properly liened all of the noncustodial parent's real and personal property, whereupon they agreed to turn the money over to DCS. This initial cooperative effort resulted in a payment of $2,424 to the custodial parent. Since then, two other cases have yielded payments of $3,932 and $4,605.

Each of the nine DCS field offices now has one liaison to work these cases. The liaison is responsible for taking calls from law enforcement, cross-referencing names by Social Security Number, and reviewing the child support case to determine if a lien has been properly filed. A garnishment is then issued to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

This program provides opportunities for DCS to work in cooperation with various branches of law enforcement. Law enforcement officers are encouraged to work with SEO officers to identify individuals who have child support cases and who have been involved in an incident which resulted in the seizure of drug money.

If for any reason the monies taken as part of the seizure must be returned to the owner, the law enforcement agency is asked to contact DCS for cross-referencing the name of the individual. If a match is found, and the individual owes child support, the money is diverted to DCS to apply to the individual's case.

This program provides opportunities for DCS to work in cooperation with various branches of law enforcement.

Law enforcement officials are enthusiastic about the program and have been quick to expand the idea to include other areas, such as money posted for bail.

If you would like to learn more about this program, contact Melanie Watters at (360) 438-7890. □

Melanie Watters is a Support Enforcement Officer in the Olympia, Washington, Office of the Division of Child Support.

If you have an innovative idea or program that's getting results, we'd like to share it with our readers. Send a note about it, or call the editor, Phil Sharman, at (202) 401-4626. □

Drivers License Suspension in Maryland

By: John Clark and Kay Cullen

Under welfare reform, states have the authority to withhold, suspend, or restrict the use of drivers licenses, professional and occupational licenses, and recreational licenses of individuals owing past-due support, or failing to comply with subpoenas or warrants relating to paternity or child support proceedings.

The drivers license suspension program in Maryland became effective October 1, 1996, and has proven to be a powerful enforcement tool. The program has brought in $7 million in child support collections–at a total advertising expenditure of $144,184–a return of $48.55 on every ad dollar invested.

On the day before the program became effective, the line of delinquent payors waiting to pay their support in order to avoid license suspension stretched out of the building and down the sidewalks. This response was the result of a very effective multi-media advertising campaign, with the theme: If you don't want to lose your drivers license, pay your child support.

The campaign began well before the effective date of the program, with Maryland's Child Support Enforcement Administration (CSEA) and Motor Vehicle Administration holding a joint press conference. This was followed by a press release from the Governor's Office. Advance notices were mailed to all delinquent payors in the State, advising them of the law's effective date and urging them to take advantage of the opportunity to bring their accounts into compliance.

Brochures, billboards, posters, and transit advertising were employed statewide. As the effective date drew near, over 400 radio and television ads aired statewide, including ads on Monday Night Football.

Once the program got underway, advertising focused on the February 3, 1997, target date for first suspensions. Full page ads were taken in newspapers, and posters were placed in all the stores of a major food chain in the State.

Clifford Layman, Executive Director of Maryland's CSEA, praised "the tremendous collaborative effort among State agencies that helped to insure the success of the program." Noting that 2,000 drivers licenses have been suspended, Layman continued, "While these suspensions are necessary, our goal is not to suspend drivers licenses. Our goal is the collection of the support due the children of Maryland."

Maryland officials say that in preparing to implement license suspension programs, a state should mount an advertising campaign to create public awareness and support. This is critical to success. Automated systems specialists need to be included in the development phase, since system capabilities and limitations must be considered in designing the program.

In addition, coordination and constant communication with all partners in the program is required for effective implementation. Drivers license suspension efforts involve personnel from child support enforcement, systems, motor vehicles, administrative hearings, and the media. Finally, the program should be phased in gradually before going statewide.

For more information about the drivers license suspension program, contact Pat Chappell at (410) 767-7455. For information about the advertising campaign, contact Kay Cullen at (410) 767-7126. □

John Clark is a Program Analyst for OCSE in the Philadelphia Regional Office; Kay Cullen is Public Affairs Officer in Maryland's Child Support Enforcement Administration.

New UIFSA Forms

Revised interstate forms, required because of the shift from URESA to UIFSA in the welfare reform legislation, were approved by the Federal Office of Management and Budget on April 30, 1997. OCSE distributed these forms on May 2, 1997, via AT 97-06.

States are now required to use these new interstate forms. A majority of states have already implemented UIFSA, which welfare reform mandates that all states enact by January 1, 1998. During the remaining months of transition from URESA to UIFSA, the forms will have a field, in their header section, where each state will indicate its existing interstate statutory scheme (UIFSA or URESA).

In addition to providing the forms in hard copy, OCSE has contracted with a vendor to develop the software necessary to enable the states' automated systems to automatically generate these forms. OCSE anticipates that this software will be available for distribution by the fall of this year.

If you would like further information about the forms, call OCSE's Steve Cesar at (202) 401-5436. □

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Child Support Report

Facts About Fathers

In 1992, 74 percent of all children were living with their father or step-father (CPR).

Living with both biological parents reduces the risk of dropping out of high school, teen pregnancy, and unemployment (MS).

In two parent households, both parents' characteristics contribute to the overall success and well-being of children, but each parent also adds value over and above the contribution of the other parent: fathers' effect is shown more on education, psychological distress, and self-esteem; mothers' on kinship ties and friendships (Amato).

Of all single parent families, 14 percent were maintained by fathers in 1992 (CPR).

About 40 percent of noncustodial fathers report paying child support. The average amount: $3,400 per year–an average of about 15 percent of the paying noncustodial father's income. Poor fathers who pay support pay an average of 28 percent of their income; nonpoor fathers an average of 10 percent (ES).

Child support payments and contact are highly correlated. Fathers who pay support are more likely to have contact with their children, and fathers who have contact are more likely to pay support (ZN). ☐

Sources: Current Population Reports (CPR); Mclanahan & Sandefur, Growing up with a single parent (MS); Zill and Nord, Noncustodial parents' participation in their children's lives (ZN); Paul Amato, More than money–men's contribution to their children's lives; Elaine Sorensen's analysis of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (ES).

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If you have enjoyed this issue of ***Child Support Report****, please pass it on to a co-worker or friend.*

Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement **Vol. XIX, No. 7, July 1997**

Imaging Technology Payment Processing in Washington State

By: Steve Spitzer

Without hiring additional staff, how do you process more payments in less time and with less money while remaining in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and meeting federal and state distribution time lines?

In March of 1997, Washington State's Division of Child Support (DCS) installed a new child support payment processing system that does just that. Taking advantage of imaging technology, the new Financial Management Imaging System (FMIS) is the culmination of a three year effort to redesign the State's centralized child support payment processing system.

Prior to FMIS, payments could not be deposited to the State treasury until processing was complete. This made it impossible to deposit the money within the 24 hour time frame required by State law. (Section 312 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996–welfare reform–requires distribution of collected support within two business days after receipt.)

In addition, with the volume of payments being processed in hard copy form, internal controls could not be implemented under the old system without drastically slowing down the payment processing–making it difficult to adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Another problem: 35 percent of child support receipts do not contain enough information to process payments without additional research to identify the correct cases to apply the money to–which meant more delays in getting payments to customers. FMIS met all these challenges within the first 60 days of its implementation.

Washington State's FMIS team: l. to r., Steve Spitzer, Lynnie Larson, Kelley Romeo.

Deposits are now made within 24 hours, which brings DCS into compliance with State law and saves thousands of dollars in banking fees. Internal controls also are improved, providing better protection of the money under DCS control. And delays in distributing payments because of inadequate payer identification have been substantially reduced, enabling us to meet new federal time lines for processing payments under welfare reform.

All of this has been done without hiring additional child support payment processing staff.

Christine Loman, an FMIS payment processing clerk says, "This system is fast and efficient. I no longer

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have to shuffle paper!" Adds Jerome Sweet, another FMIS clerk, "Many things that used to go through five or six hands now go through only one."

How FMIS Works

Scanners convert checks into digital images, which are indexed, the deposit created, and receipt numbers assigned–all on the day the money is received.

FMIS will enable a support enforcement officer to immediately look up payments from a field location in 17 different ways.

After indexing, the receipts are released for electronic identification. Checks are sent to the bank while payment processing continues using the digital images. Once the bank account number and its corresponding receipt information are entered into FMIS, the system will identify that account number with its corresponding information each time a payment is received.

This process, called "modeling," enables payments to be processed even when the payer has not provided enough payment identification information. (Payments that require further research are researched only once; after that the system automatically identifies the case from the modeling information.) "The modeling feature is a great help when processing multiple payments," comments Lynnie Larsen, Cash Operations Manager for Washington State DCS.

The next phase will involve extending FMIS to DCS's field offices. FMIS will enable a support enforcement officer to immediately look up payments from a field location in 17 different ways, including: payment amount, bank account number, payment number, receipt number, payer name, social security number, and even a range of dates or amounts.

Meg Sollenberger, Washington State's Child Support Enforcement Director, comments, "I am very proud of my staff's wonderful accomplishment in developing FMIS–a state-of-the-art payment processing system that is achieving all the goals we set for it."

For more information on FMIS, or imaging, contact Steve Spitzer at (360) 586-5383. Or write to him on the Internet at: SSPITZER@DSHS.WA.GOV □

Steve Spitzer is Imaging Project Manager in Washington State's Division of Child Support.

Medical Support for Military Children

By: Sheck Chin

Q: ***I've been trying, without success, to get medical support for children of parents who are in the military. I've sent the medical support request to the Finance Office in Cleveland, but they do not respond. What do I need to do?***

A: Medical support requests should not be sent to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Cleveland. Medical coverage for a child of a military parent is obtained by enrolling the child in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Either the sponsor (the service member) or the custodial parent can enroll the child at any military facility with on-line access to DEERS–usually the base personnel or military identification card issuance office.

Normally, the custodial parent will have to travel to a base to complete an application for a dependent's identification card.

Q: ***The nearest U.S. Navy base is over a hundred miles away and the custodial parent does not have any means to get there. Is there another way to get the child enrolled in DEERS?***

A: The branch of service of the DEERS enrollment site does not have to match the service of the noncustodial parent (enrollment of Navy dependents, for example, can be taken care of at an Army facility), so it might be possible in this case to find a more convenient location. Normally, the custodial parent will have to travel to a base to complete an application for a dependent's identification card (DoD Form 1172).

Continued on page 3

Access to Health Care for IV-D Children

By: Nehemiah Rucker

A goal of the Child Support Enforcement Program is to ensure that all child support orders contain provisions for the health care coverage of children in IV-D cases–to ensure that these children receive the health care services so vital to a healthy start in life.

But working parents who have incomes just above the poverty level do not qualify for Medicaid, nor can they often afford the cost of private health insurance. Prior to passage of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (OBRA '93), practices by some employers blocked access to health insurance coverage by children of these "working poor" parents.

For example, some employers denied enrollment of a child under a noncustodial parent's employment-based health plan if the child:

- was born out of wedlock;
- was not claimed as a dependent on the noncustodial parent's federal income tax return;
- did not reside with the noncustodial parent or in the insurer's service area; or if
- the application for benefits was made at a time outside the "open enrollment" period.

Under OBRA '93, however, neither employers nor insurers are allowed to deny enrollment to a child on the basis of any of these factors.

OBRA '93 authorizes a custodial parent (or the IV-D or Medicaid agency) to enroll a child under family coverage of a noncustodial parent's employer-based health plan if the noncustodial parent is enrolled and is required to provide health insurance for the child. Employers must withhold from the noncustodial parent's wages the noncustodial parent's share (if any) of the premium for health coverage up to the maximum amount allowed under the Consumer Credit Protection Act and pay this share to the insurer. Once a child is enrolled in an employer-based health plan, the employer may not disenroll the child unless:

- the employer is given satisfactory evidence that the court or administrative order directing enrollment is no longer in effect;
- the child is or will be enrolled in comparable coverage taking effect not later than the date of disenrollment; or
- the employer has eliminated family health coverage for all of its employees.

These provisions enhance the effectiveness of the CSE Program's efforts to help children of low income parents gain access to health benefits.

Even though the major medical child support provisions of OBRA '93 (which revised section 1908 of the Social Security Act) are regulated by the Medicaid program, these provisions greatly enhance the effectiveness of the Child Support Enforcement Program's efforts to help children of low income parents gain access to the health benefits available through the employment-based plans of their noncustodial parents.

If you would like more information, contact Nehemiah Rucker at (202) 401-9282.□

Nehemiah Rucker is OCSE Medical and Health Care Liaison Officer.

Military Support

Continued from page 2

The application is then forwarded to the service member for acknowledgement. When the form is returned to the local DEERS site, the custodial parent and child will need to return to complete the process and obtain a photo ID card for the child.

Although DEERS enrollment can be completed by mail, the process may vary for different DEERS locations. It is usually best to call the nearest DEERS site to inquire about the option of enrolling a military member's child by mail.

For additional information about enrollment in DEERS, or the location of the nearest enrollment site, contact any military personnel office or review OCSE Information Memorandum IM-96-02. (For a copy call OCSE's National Resource Center at (202) 401-9383.) Also, see the September '96 *CSR*, "Seeking Medical Benefits from the Military."□

Sheck Chin is OCSE's Military Liaison Officer.

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Technical Assistance Now Available

State child support enforcement leadership, together with federal regional and central office OCSE staff, have completed work on a national plan for the provision of technical assistance (TA). After extensive planning and preparation, OCSE regional and central office staff are now ready to ensure that TA is provided by the best available means–state or federal staff, or private contractor–to serve the needs of state child support programs.

The TA plan is based on states' own self-assessments of their technical assistance needs. These were analyzed by each federal regional office and developed into a regional TA plan. Those TA needs requiring assistance beyond regional office resources were then incorporated into the national plan by representatives of state agencies and the regional/central office OCSE staff during a two-day retreat.

The TA plan is based on states' own self-assessments of their technical assistance needs.

OCSE's Technical Assistance Branch, in cooperation with the regional offices and states, then developed its strategy for meeting the needs identified in the national plan. It includes:

- on-site and off-site TA to analyze programs and provide transfer of best practices from other states;
- forums, conferences, retreats, and workshops to discuss issues and seek consensus resolutions to problems; and
- drafting and disseminating publications, videos, and other outreach materials for caseworkers, managers, attorneys, and other child support players.

Most of the materials are expected eventually to be available electronically on the OCSE Internet Home Page, through the OCSE Clearinghouse, on CD-ROM, on computer diskette, or in hard copy.

While OCSE is already addressing some of the needs through conferences, workshops, information dissemination, and on-site assistance, the agency also is gearing up to serve states on a variety of issues for which–so far–no explicit TA request has been received. A paternity forum, a retreat on "One State Interstate" issues, and a Good Cause/Non-cooperation Symposium have already been held. And a list of resource persons who are knowledgeable about aspects of welfare reform has been produced for wide dissemination.

States can make TA requests through the regional offices. For more information, call your local federal regional office, or call Susan Greenblatt of OCSE's Technical Assistance Branch at (202) 401-4849. □

Did You Know . . .

Both custodial fathers and custodial mothers state one of the two most common reasons they were not awarded child support was that *"they did not pursue an award"* (one-third each). The other reason for custodial fathers was that *"they did not want an award"* (one-third), and for custodial mothers it was that *"they were unable to locate the father"* (one-fifth).

While the general practice is for persons applying for support enforcement services to apply for the complete range of services, an applicant can limit his or her request to "location-only" services. Through this mechanism, a child's attorney or court-appointed guardian ad litem could obtain access to the full range of location sources. □

[Source for reasons support not awarded: Current Population Reports, Bureau of the Census, Consumer Income Series P60-187.]

Call for Articles

Authors wanted! *CSR* is looking for articles. We are especially interested in articles written by local-level caseworkers that describe new and innovative approaches to the job. Four to six hundred words is a good length for us, though we accept longer pieces on occasion. Photos are a plus. If you have a fresh idea and would like to share it with your colleagues in other states, or if you know of someone who does, give Phil Sharman a call at (202) 401-4626. □

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One-Stop Federal Statistics Web Site

Official federal statistics are now much easier and faster to find, thanks to a new World Wide Web site: FedStats (www.fedstats.gov). FedStats uses the Internet's powerful link and search capabilities to navigate publicly available statistics from over 70 federal agencies. Now, Internet users can find needed information without having to know in advance which agency produces the data.

"FedStats takes advantage of Internet technology to make federal statistics more accessible," said Sally Katzen, administrator of the Office of Management and Budget's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. "Today, a high school student with a modem in Boise, Idaho, has better access to Federal statistics than top officials in Washington had five years ago."

Katzen stressed that FedStats should not raise concerns about the confidentiality of personal information. "No data on individuals can be accessed through FedStats," she said. "The statistics are summaries and have no names or addresses attached to them."

Today, a high school student in Boise, Idaho, has better access to federal statistics than top officials in Washington had five years ago.

FedStats' major features include:

- An "A to Z" index that provides direct access to detailed data listings in 275 categories;
- A keyword search capability that enables users to search Web sites linked to FedStats;
- "Fast Facts" links, which allow users to visit the Federal Statistics Briefing Rooms or an on-line version of frequently requested tables from the Statistical Abstract of the United States;
- An "Agencies" heading that allows users to link to the Web sites of federal statistical agencies, or select from a menu of predetermined key words for those agencies;
- A "Programs" heading that offers 14 groups of agency data program summaries, in areas ranging from agriculture to transportation;
- A "Regional Statistics" heading that offers data that are broken down into geographic areas–frequently at state or county levels; and
- Links to agency contacts, press releases, and government statistical agencies outside the United States.

An on-line form permits users to comment on the site and make suggestions.□

Navajo Nation and New Mexico Sign Agreement

On May 1, 1997, representatives from OCSE's regional and central offices visited the Navajo Indian Nation in Window Rock, Arizona, to witness the signing of the Performance Agreement between the Navajo Nation and New Mexico.

The Agreement reaffirms the full and equal status of the partners.

The Agreement reaffirms the full and equal status of the partners for the enforcement of child support on Navajo Nation lands and enhances the existing partnership between the Navajo Nation, New Mexico's child support enforcement program, and ACF's Region VI child support office.

The visit included a tour of the Navajo Nation's public and governmental facilities and a meeting with Navajo Nation Vice-President Thomas Atcitty, other Navajo officials, and representatives from the Navajo Nation Child Support Enforcement Program and the Office of Navajo Women.

Signing the agreement were Vice-President Atcitty for the Navajo Nation; New Mexico Human Services Department Secretary Duke Rodriguez; Assistant Deputy Director Anne F. Donovan for OCSE; and ACF West Central Hub Director Leon McCowan for the Regional Offices.

Also present were Ben Silva, Director of New Mexico's child support program; Lawrence Dunmore, a Native American attorney in OCSE; and Carl Rich, Region VI child support enforcement program specialist for New Mexico.□

So. Dakota's Most Wanted

By Rosanne Robinson

South Dakota has mounted three Most Wanted Poster campaigns–one in 1995 and two in 1996. The State is in the process of finalizing its 1997 poster for release this summer.

The current poster was sent to 20 post offices in heavily populated areas of the State and is shown regularly on two cable TV stations that have wide State coverage. It is also available on the State's child support enforcement Internet Home Page.

Each poster contains eight pictures, with descriptive information, of noncustodial parents who owe a significant child support arrearage. South Dakota makes an effort to include at least one female noncustodial parent on each poster.

Of the 23 nonsupporting parents included on Most Wanted posters since 1995, 19 have been located, including six of the eight who appear on the current poster.

South Dakota estimates a total of $15,000 has been collected as a direct result of implementing its Most Wanted poster campaigns. Nine of the 19 located obligors have made child support payments. Five of these nine parents are now making regular payments, and four have made occasional payments. Enforcement actions are currently pending on the remaining 10 obligors who were located.

In addition to increasing collections, South Dakota's Office of Child Support Enforcement staff emphasize a secondary benefit from the campaigns: the posters serve to increase the visibility of the child support enforcement program. Staff report that they regularly receive positive feedback on South Dakota's collection efforts associated with the publication of the posters.

For additional information, contact South Dakota's Louween Schoenhard at (605) 773-3641.□

Rosanne Robinson is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Denver Regional Office.

Coming Soon: Mark Your Calendar

CSE 7th National CSE Training Conference, *"Child Support's New Era: Strengthening Agencies to Strengthen Families–Changing CSE through Partnerships, Collaboration, and Technology."* **September 15-17, 1997,** Radisson Plaza Hotel at Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22311, (703) 845-1010. For information: Mae Rowlett at (202) 401-5443.

National Training Work Group Meets

By Charlene Butler

Following up on what was learned from the Training Needs Assessment (see April '97 *CSR*), the National Child Support Enforcement Training Work Group met recently in Alexandria, Virginia, to review progress and consider next steps.

Calling the meeting a "catalyst for momentum," Work Group co-chair Beth Dulac, Vermont Training Coordinator, encouraged the sub-group participants to set goals and develop realistic work plans around them to help states meet their training priorities.

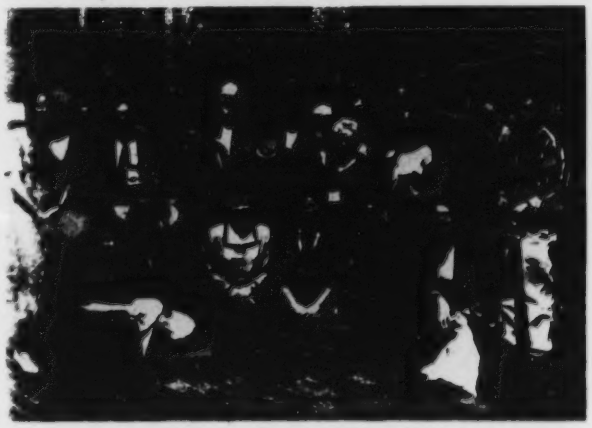
Michelle Jefferson, Director of OCSE's Division of State and Local Assistance, asked the members to focus on those issues identified by the states in the Training Needs Assessment. "By doing so," she said, "I am confident that we will be able to complete the many tasks that we have set for ourselves."

Work Group members identified four sub-groups to carry out their mission. The sub-groups, with their chairs, are:

Distance Learning, *Beth Dulac, Vermont;*
Indexing, *Tom Horan, Connecticut;*
Curriculum, *Bertha Hammett, OCSE; and*
Coordination, *Leslee Arnold, Nevada.*

The next meeting of the Work Group will take place in Washington DC, September 18, the day following OCSE's 7th National CSE Training Conference. For more information, call Charlene Butler at (202) 401-5091 or Beth Dulac at (802) 241-2825.□

Charlene Butler is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Division of State and Local Assistance.



The National CSE Training Work Group.

1997 Conference Calendar

The Calendar is printed quarterly in *CSR*: in January, April, July, and October. If you are planning a meeting or conference and would like it to be included in the Calendar, please call OCSE's Bertha Hammett at (202) 401-5292 or fax her at (202) 401-5559.

The Calendar is accessible through the Federal OCSE Web Site under the "News" section:
http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/ACFPrograms/CSE/indexhtml.
The listing is also available on the OCSE Section of ACF's Bulletin Board at (800) 627-8886.

July

15-16 *Big 8 Meeting*, Omni Austin Hotel–Downtown, Austin, TX, Marion Steffy (312) 353-0166.

19-23 *APWA National Council of State Human Resource Administrators*, Summer Meeting, Washington Court Hotel, Washington, DC, Toni Baker (202) 682-0100.

21 *APWA Child Support Committee*, Washington Court Hotel, Washington, DC, Toni Baker (202) 682-0100.

28-30 *Southwest Regional Support Enforcement Association Conference*, DoubleTree Hotel, New Orleans, LA, Gordon Hood (504) 342-4780 or Rosalyn Shackelford (504) 342-7150.

August

1 *West Virginia CSE Division Teleconference Series '97: Enforcement Strategies*, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV, Gretchen Lewis (304) 558-3780.

24-28 *NCSEA 46th Annual Training Conference & Expedition*, Scottsdale Princess Hotel, Phoenix, AZ, Heather Tonks (202) 624-8180.

September

15-17 *OCSE Seventh National Child Support Enforcement Training Conference*, Radisson Mark Center, Alexandria, VA, Mae Rowlett (202) 401-5443.

16-19 *Nebraska CSE Association 16th Annual Training Conference*, Holiday Inn, Hastings, NE, Bill MacKenzie (402) 593-4464.

30-October 2 *Western Interstate CSE Council on Welfare Reform: New and Proven Techniques for Effective Enforcement*, Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish, MT, Bruce Kaspari (916) 323-5662.

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October

8-10 *Maryland Joint Child Support Conference*, Princess Royale Hotel, Ocean City, MD, Donna Sims (410) 767-7876.

13-14 *NCSEA Meeting on Welfare Reform*, Denver Hilton South, Denver, CO, Holly Powell (202) 624-8180.

28-31 *California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting*, Hyatt Regency Alicant, Anaheim, CA, Noanne J. St. Jean (209) 584-1425.

November

2-5 *Administration for Children and Families Users' Conference*, Downtown Ramada Inn, Topeka, KS, Mike Purcell (913) 296-5427 or Robin Rushton (202) 690-1244.

26-28 *NCSEA UIFSA Training*, Hyatt Regency, Sacramento, CA, Holly Powell (202) 624-8180.

December

4-5 *NCSEA Domestic Violence Forum (IV-A/IV-D Cooperation)*, Hyatt Regency, Austin, TX, Holly Powell (202) 624-8180.

6-10 *APWA National Council of State Human Service Administrators*, Winter Meeting, Ana Hotel, San Francisco, CA, Toni Baker (202) 682-0100.

8 *APWA Child Support Committee*, Ana Hotel, San Francisco, CA, Toni Baker (202) 682-0100. □

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Child Support Report

New Brochure Available

OCSE has just released *New Hire Reporting: Answers to Your Questions*, a brochure for employers.

In Q and A format, it includes a list of state child support office telephone numbers for employers to call for further information.

While not state-specific, this brochure is suitable for outreach to employers in your state. For free copies, call Nancy Reder of J & E Associates at (301) 495-0400. ☐

Child Support Report
Vol. XIX No. 7
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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XIX, No. 8, August 1997

Noncustodial Parents' Participation in their Children's Lives

By: Christine Winquist Nord and Nicholas Zill

The following summary is from the final report of the Nord and Zill study: "Noncustodial Parents' Participation in their Children's Lives: Evidence from the Survey of Income and Program Participation."

It can no longer be assumed that most children will spend their entire childhoods living with both parents. To the contrary, approximately half will live in single-parent homes at some point before they turn age 18. Unfortunately, a common pattern is for the nonresidential parent to become increasingly detached over time, paying minimal or no child support and visiting infrequently, if at all.

The costs to the children involved and to society at large of this disengagement are far from trivial. Many noncustodial parents do not pay all the child support they owe. Others have no [legal] obligation to pay support. Nonpayment of support forces some families below the poverty level and onto government welfare programs.

For others, it means a reduced standard of living and an uncertain future. The costs to children are seen in an increased likelihood of dropping out of school and increased social, emotional, psychological, and behavioral problems. Not all children are affected, and some who are overcome their difficulties in a few years. But others experience long-term setbacks.

The aim of this project was to improve understanding of the relationship between noncustodial parent involvement, children's well-being, child support, and custody arrangements. The connections between these are still not well understood. Two approaches were used.

Analyses of data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) were used to provide national estimates of persons living in different custody arrangements and to examine the connections between parental involvement, children's well-being, child support, and custody arrangements in both the divorced and never-married populations.

In addition, a review of recent literature was conducted and gaps in the research were noted. The findings of the review were used to guide the SIPP analyses.

The SIPP is based on a national probability sample of the U.S. civilian, noninstitutionalized population. It is funded and conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and is a major source of information about the demographic and economic situation of persons and families in the United States. The SIPP is one of two national surveys containing extensive amounts of child support information–the other being the Current Population Survey.

PS 4164

U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

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The SIPP was uniquely suited to examine the relationship of parental involvement, child well-being, child support, and child custody. It contains detailed programmatic information; longitudinal data; and a child support module with questions on award, payment, custody, visitation, and child well-being.

There are a variety of questions in SIPP that can be used to assess the economic well-being of children and, to a lesser extent, their social well-being. SIPP also contains topical modules which ask about consumer durables owned by each household, the living conditions of households, and the ability of households to meet basic needs.

These modules were used to characterize the circumstances in which children are growing up. In addition, the SIPP contains information about the health of persons aged 15 and older.

Highlights

- Twenty-one percent or 1.3 million custodial parents with formal written child support agreements report a joint custody arrangement. Of these, over 1 million (80 percent) have a joint legal only arrangement. The remaining 262 thousand report that they have a joint legal and physical custody arrangement;
- A large minority of custodial parents (45 percent) have never had a child support agreement of any type. About 14 percent of custodial parents without a written award report that the nonresident parent provided child support or noncash assistance in the previous year;
- Court-ordered agreements are the most common type of written agreement, with 73 percent of custodial parents reporting them. Twenty-three percent report voluntary agreements which were ratified by the court. Three percent report some other type of written agreement, such as one not ratified by the court;
- Nearly two-thirds (64.6 percent) or almost 4 million custodial parents with written agreements report that their agreements provide for visitation;
- According to the reports of custodial mothers with written agreements, nearly one-third (32 percent) of nonresident fathers have not spent time with their children in the previous 12 months. However, nearly one-quarter (24 percent) of nonresident fathers see their children at least once a week;
- Nonresident mothers are more likely to visit their children more often than nonresident fathers. Sixteen percent of nonresident mothers had not visited their children in the past year compared to 32 percent of nonresident fathers. Thirty-five percent of nonresident mothers saw their children once a week or more compared to 24 percent of nonresident fathers; and
- Custodial parents with written child support agreements who were owed child support received about 65 percent of what they were due. Parents with voluntary agreements received 73 percent, while those with court-ordered agreements received 62 percent. Parents living in the same city or county as the nonresident parent received 70 percent of what was due compared to 58 percent when the nonresident parent lived in a different state.

Nearly two-thirds (64.6 percent) or almost 4 million custodial parents with written agreements report that their agreements provide for visitation.

Although caution must be used in drawing policy-related conclusions about the findings of this study, the SIPP analyses provide support for the following types of activities:

- Encouraging parents to establish child support agreements through a process of bargaining and mutual agreement, whenever feasible, rather than through litigation and court mandate, and providing services, if needed, to assist in the process;
- Encouraging couples to specify visitation provisions in their agreements;
- Encouraging and facilitating contact between nonresident fathers and their children, when feasible; and
- Promoting joint custody arrangements.

Copies of the complete report can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, DHHS, at (202) 690-7907. □

Christine Winquist Nord is Senior Study Director at Westat, Inc., Rockville, MD; Nicholas Zill is Westat's Vice-President and Study Area Director.

Twentieth Annual Report to Congress Documents CSE Program Progress

The Office of Child Support Enforcement's "Twentieth Annual Report to Congress on Child Support Enforcement," issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, shows dramatic improvement in critical areas of child support enforcement.

Preliminary data for fiscal year 1996 indicates that the Federal/State partnership collected a record $12 billion.

According to the report, released on July 10, 1997, the Federal/State Child Support Enforcement program has made record increases in child support collections, paternity establishments, and numbers of families receiving collections.The report describes collections and other child support activities nationwide during fiscal year 1995 (October 1994 - September 1995). It also contains state-by-state financial and program data.

For fiscal year 1995, $10.8 billion was collected from noncustodial parents. Preliminary data for fiscal year 1996 indicates that the Federal/State partnership collected a record $12 billion, surpassing the previous estimate of $11.8 billion. Since 1992, child support collections have increased by $4 billion, or 50 percent.

The report also shows a dramatic increase in paternity establishment. In fiscal year 1995, over 900,000 paternities were established, exceeding previous estimates of 735,000 paternities. Preliminary data for fiscal year 1996 shows that the number of paternities established rose to nearly 1 million, almost double the 516,000 in 1992. The increase is largely attributed to paternities established as part of the voluntary in-hospital paternity establishment regulation.

New estimates from fiscal year 1996 also show that cases with a collection increased to nearly 4 million, an increase of 43 percent over the 2.8 million in 1992.

The cost effectiveness of the child support enforcement program is calculated by determining how much child support is collected per dollar of administrative

spending. The program's cost effectiveness ratio of 3.59 in 1995 is estimated to improve to 3.94 in 1996, an increase of 10 percent. The result of this improved management: more money for children.

"No parents should or will be allowed to evade responsibility to support their children," said David Gray Ross, Deputy Director and operating head of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement. "We–the states and the federal government–now have both the will and the way to find any parent, at home or at work, and collect child support to help children to a stronger and brighter future."

"No parents should or will be allowed to evade responsibility to support their children."

David Gray Ross

The CSE program serves families receiving assistance under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program (now, since welfare reform, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program) as well as other families who apply for services.

For a copy of the Twentieth Annual Report to Congress, call OCSE's National Resource Center at (202) 401-9383. □

State News

States Work on Outreach to Employers: New Hire Reporting Gains Momentum

State staff from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin were joined by staff from New Jersey and Pennsylvania in a special OCSE-hosted meeting on employer outreach June 25 and 26 in Itasca, Illinois.

Each of the participating states was asked to send staff with responsibility for notifying employers about new hire reporting requirements. In most cases, states sent two representatives–one from the employment security agency and one from child support.

Federal staff also participated in the meeting, the purpose of which was two-fold:

- to assist the participating states in developing more effective employer outreach programs for new hire reporting; and
- to test the format as a prototype for additional regional and state-level technical assistance meetings.

The meeting also afforded federal regional staff, who continue to provide technical assistance to states on employer outreach, an opportunity for further training on new hire reporting.

Panelists Kay Dunkelberger, Director of New Hire Reporting for Minnesota; Ron DiGregorio of BDM and manager of New Hire Reporting for Ohio; Jim Owen, payroll manager of Meijer, Inc.; and Peter Isberg from Automatic Data Processors, representing the Employer Coalition of Child Support Enforcement, shared their expertise and experiences.

As skilled practitioners of new hire reporting, they provided numerous tips and suggestions for reaching out to employers and bringing them in as committed partners (see sidebars).

During the second day of the meeting, states worked on employer outreach plans tailored to their specific needs.

Each state's plan, once finalized, will be a cornerstone of its employer outreach initiative.

If you would like further information, including a copy of the proceedings from this meeting, please call Karen Bartlett at (202) 401-4630. □

Tips for Employer Outreach

Make connections with employers. Establish an employer advisory board. Provide them with opportunity for advance review of materials such as proposed legislation, letters to employers, and brochures;

Permit employers to report by a variety of methods, including tape, diskette, fax (try a never-busy fax line). You may want to consider Internet reporting;

Send information letters to employers notifying them about the program. Send more than one. Use first-class mail (letters will be forwarded if addresses have changed);

Send thank you letters periodically to employers to let them know the results of their efforts;

If your community college offers training for new employers, add a module on child support enforcement issues, including new hire reporting;

Keep elected officials aware of your activities;

Establish an 800 number for employer outreach–this is appreciated by all employers but especially by the smaller ones; and

Give a strong signal of support to employers by assigning a specific staff person to be the liaison between your agency and the employer community. □

....for Agricultural Employer Outreach

Work with your agriculture extension service–it is in constant contact with farmers;

Work with local farmers' associations and offer to speak at their meetings;

Arrange for booths at county and state fairs;

Put a public service announcement on channels which routinely carry agricultural news;

Put posters in farmers' co-ops. Include phone numbers to call for more information; and

Write articles for farm journals and other publications farmers subscribe to and read. □

....more state news

At the Movies in Texas

During July, the Texas Office of the Attorney General used movie theater on-screen slide presentations to promote child support and responsible parenthood. Designed to capture maximum viewers, the four-week campaign began the July 4th weekend and ended July 31. The slides were displayed at selected theaters throughout Dallas/Ft. Worth, Houston, and San Antonio.

For more information, call Alicia Terry at (512) 463-2050.□

Putting Children First in Illinois

The Illinois Division of Child Support Enforcement has developed a color poster that urges everyone to "Put Children First." Copies with English or Spanish text have appeared on tollways and are being distributed statewide to community groups and other organizations interested in the welfare of children and families.

The poster incorporates the artwork of Guillermo Cruz, grand prize winner of the 1996 children's art and verse contest co-sponsored by the Illinois Department of Public Aid and the Chicago Area Project, a community organization.

"We want to stress the importance of putting children first in all of our lives," says Dianna Durham-McLoud, Administrator of Illinois' Child Support Enforcement Program. "The poster is a colorful and uplifting reminder that the love of the family is the most important thing in the world."

For more information call Karen Newton-Matza at (312) 793-8223 or Helen Rodriguez at (312) 793-8233.□

FYI . . . of Potential Interest

Hotlines for New and Expectant Moms

For the first time, just by calling 1-800-311-BABY, women can reach either their own state's maternal and child health program or a local Healthy Start site, whichever is closer. Spanish-speaking callers can dial 1-800-504-7081 for the new National Hispanic Prenatal Hotline, which provides answers to questions about prenatal issues in English and Spanish, mails out culturally appropriate information, and acts as a resource to providers who work with Hispanic families around prenatal care issues.

Callers to both hotlines are told which prenatal care services are located nearest to where they live. Hotlines also put people in touch with other services, organizations, and agencies that are working to improve maternal and child health, including:

- Assistance programs such as Medicaid, Food Stamps, and WIC (The Department of Agriculture's Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children);
- Providers of prenatal clinical care Home Visiting services;
- Translation services and other culturally focused programs;
- Classes in parenting;
- Programs for stopping smoking;
- Male support programs; and
- Substance abuse treatment programs.

Emphasizing the Need for Prenatal Care

To have a healthy baby and a safe pregnancy, a mother-to-be must make some important decisions–seeking prenatal care as soon as possible is the most crucial. Tragically, many women do not get prenatal care during pregnancy–and their babies may be born too early or die. Some facts:

25 percent of U.S. women fail to get prenatal care in the first three months of pregnancy–the most important time in an unborn baby's development;

Babies born to women who don't receive prenatal care are four times more likely to die before their first birthday; and

Each year 33,000 babies die in the U.S. before they are a year old.□

Source: Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Letter to the Editor

Estimates are that by the year 2000 nearly 50 percent of children in America will spend part of their growing-up years in single-parent households. The vast majority of these children will be raised by their mothers.

While the implications of this trend are not yet fully understood, many are troubled by it. Compared with children growing up in two-parent homes, children in single-parent families are twice as likely to drop out of high school, twice as likely to have a child before age 20, and more than twice as likely to live in poverty.

The lack of money to provide for the everyday needs of the children is especially difficult for single parents. In our work each day we see how easy it is for financial concerns to overshadow everything else for these families. If you can't put food on the table, it's hard to concentrate on other things.

Many families today find it difficult to get by on one income. For a single mother who works, child care expenses alone can consume a large portion of a paycheck. While a second income from father can make a lot of difference, the presence of a second parent to provide relief from the day-to-day trials and tribulations of parenthood can be just as welcome.

The role of a father with respect to authority and discipline also can be beneficial. Fathers are important to their families in many ways, whether living with them or not, and this message seems to be getting out. We are seeing more and more fathers who want to be involved with their children and are deeply concerned about their children's future.

Children themselves are not unaware of the need for a father. A young man who never knew his father has written a poem entitled, "I Ask–Who are You?" It contains these lines:

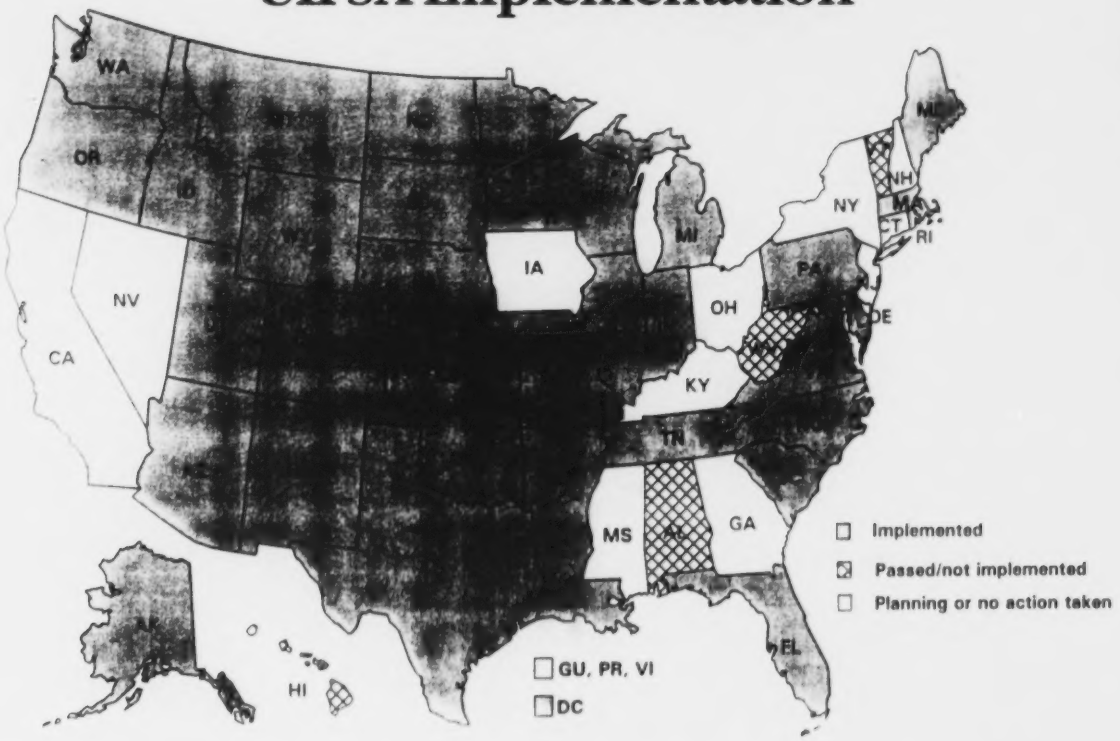
"As I walk alone/ on a trail for two/ On the rough path of manhood/ with no one to show me what to do/ I ask–who are you?"

Some others might ask, "Where are you?"□

Rebecca Ahlstrand, Sara Lucas, Jonni Anderson, and Molly Adams.

Rebecca Ahlstrand supervises Carlton County's (MN) Child Support Unit. Sara Lucas is a Guardian Ad Litem Coordinator and Jonni Anderson a Child Support Officer there. Molly Adams is a freelance writer in the area.

UIFSA Implementation



As of July 1, 1997, 35 states/jurisdictions had implemented the new Uniform Interstate Family Support Act, four had passed it but not implemented it, and the other 15 were still in the planning stage. Under the welfare reform law, all states are required to implement UIFSA, effective January 1, 1998.□

Public-Private Partnerships in Child Support Enforcement

By: David Arnaudo

Under contract to the Office of Child Support Enforcement, J & E Associates, Inc. and the Center for the Support of Children have completed a practical guide for state and local governments thinking about privatizing part or all of a child support enforcement (CSE) program.

Based on extensive field interviews and literature reviews, this "Guide to Developing Public-Private Partnerships in Child Support Enforcement" outlines noteworthy techniques for privatizing CSE activities.

Included are discussions of:

- Making the decision to privatize;
- Gaining support for the decision;
- Designing the system;
- Drafting an effective request for proposal;
- Designing an outcome-focused contract;
- Managing the transition to privatization; and
- Managing the contract.

If you would like a copy of the guide, contact OCSE's David Arnaudo at (202) 401-5263 or J & E Associate's Terry Campbell at (301) 495-0400 X 229.□

David Arnaudo is Senior Technical Advisor in OCSE's Division of Policy and Planning.

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Resources for Welfare Reform

OCSE Information Memorandum 97-02 (OCSE-IM-97-02), dated March 14, 1997, contains lists of resource persons, including federal central and regional office, state, and private sector staff.

These individuals may be helpful to you in providing information about the implementation of the various child support enforcement provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform).

The persons listed in this IM are widely considered to be knowledgeable about the child support enforcement program and about specific aspects of the welfare reform legislation.

They are prepared to share their knowledge informally with you. The lists provide their names, mailing and/or electronic addresses, and telephone numbers, so send them a note or give them a call.

If you would like a copy of OCSE-IM-97-02, call OCSE's National Resource Center at (202) 401-9383. ☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement **Vol. XIX, No. 9, September 1997**

Community Oriented Law Enforcement

An Interview with Arturo Venegas, Jr., Chief of the Sacramento, California, Police Department

Arturo Venegas, Jr.

Chief of Police in Sacramento since January, 1993, Chief Venegas oversees a budget of $76 million and 1,073 employees. His leadership has been marked by a radical redeployment of resources to emphasize neighborhood and business corridor revitalization. He has been the recipient of numerous community leadership and service awards.

CSR: *Chief Venegas, let's start with your view of child support enforcement. What's your interest in it?*

CAV: I'm interested in child support enforcement from the standpoint of holding people accountable for their behavior. If someone has a court order to pay child support and fails to do so, that person has broken the law–a law which, as law enforcement officers, we are sworn to uphold. So we have that role to play in child support enforcement.

But I prefer to think in terms of a larger issue here: the issue of providing economic support to children–how a lack of support can damage their futures and how it can affect the quality of life in their communities. It also means economic hardship, a daily struggle to survive for single parent families–the single parent usually being mom.

I think it's fair to say that research is starting to show us that kids who grow up in single parent homes with little or no support from the noncustodial parent, are going to have more problems than other kids. And these problems may retard, or even prevent, their growing up into healthy, active, stable, contributing adults–something that, as a society, we simply can't afford to have happen.

So, as a law enforcement person who thinks of the job in terms of community needs and responsibilities, I would say that our role with child support ought to be to create an environment in our communities where adults honor their commitments and responsibilities to their children so that these children have every opportunity to reach their full potential.

Continued on page 7

Special Law Enforcement Issue

Natural allies in the effort to make sure that children receive the child support they are owed and deserve, child support enforcement and law enforcement agencies haven't always taken advantage of each other's strengths. That's starting to change, as this special law enforcement issue of CSR makes clear.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

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My View

David Gray Ross

If you have been reading my columns over the past three and a half years you have seen a great deal of emphasis on what might be termed the "soft side" of child support enforcement. "We are in the business of promoting families," I have said. And I've talked about treating everyone in the family–mothers, fathers, and children–fairly, of how we are stewards of two of our nation's most precious and important resources: children and families.

But I have also said that "we must never forget that the support of children is the essence of our work," our primary consideration. The child support section of Public Law 93-647, the legislation that established the program, begins with the words, "For the purpose of enforcing the support obligations owed . . ."

Those words establish what we might call our "hard side." As the operating head of the Office of Child Support Enforcement, my job is to see to the enforcement of legally obligated child support–that those who owe support pay support.

As I said in a recent interview with the magazine, *Children Today,* "We don't make any apologies for that–it's fundamental to our mission, and we are judged by Congress and the public on how well we perform."

When parents fail
to pay
their court ordered child support
they are breaking the law,
as well as
creating serious problems
for their children,
the custodial parents, and society.

In spite of the dramatic improvement made in collections over the past four years–more than fifty percent–there is still an immense amount of unpaid child support every year. President Clinton has estimated that 700,000 mothers and children have been forced onto welfare because they don't receive the child support they are owed.

An unhappy fact of our times is that many non-custodial parents who owe child support (they are mostly men–almost 90 percent) are unwilling to pay it. I am familiar with the reasons that are given to explain this behavior, but in many cases there is no justification for it.

When parents fail to pay their court ordered child support they are breaking the law, as well as creating serious problems for their children, the custodial parents, and society. The failure to support one's children means, in the final analysis, that somebody else has to do it.

To aid us in the vital task of "enforcing the support obligations owed," I have named Chief Donald A. Deering, an experienced law enforcement executive, as Chief Law Enforcement Liaison for the agency. (See his profile in this issue.) Mr. Deering's focus will be on strengthening OCSE's ties with the criminal justice system.

This special law enforcement issue of *Child Support Report* is an early step in that direction. Others will follow as we attempt to raise the visibility of this important issue. Let us know what you think. □

Federal, State, Local Partnership Brings Results in Difficult CSE Cases

By: John E. Hartwig

The DHHS Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations (OI), is mandated to detect, investigate, and deter fraud, waste, and abuse in programs administered by the Department. In 1995, OI began a child support enforcement (CSE) initiative in connection with the Child Support Recovery Act, which President Clinton signed into law in 1992.

This Act makes it a federal offense to willfully avoid making court ordered support payments for children living in another state when there is an arrearage of more than $5,000, or when payments are more than one year behind schedule.

State CSE offices refer these cases to the United States Attorneys after exhausting all other attempts to locate the subjects and collect court ordered support. The U.S. Attorneys then refer them to OI for investigation. In early 1996, OI was granted Special Deputy United States Marshall status when investigating violations of this Act.

Since 1995 OI has opened over 130 CSE cases and participated in the arrest of 42 individuals. (See back page of this issue.) To date 22 subjects have been convicted and sentenced, with approximately $4.9 million in restitution being ordered as part of the sentencing.

Under the authority granted by the Child Support Recovery Act, OI has resources available to locate and prosecute subjects who may be beyond the reach of CSE agencies.

At first glance, these numbers may appear to be small. But keep in mind that the vast majority of non-support cases are adjudicated at the state level, either through the court system or administratively. Only the most egregious offenders against whom the state has exhausted all avenues of recourse fall within federal jurisdiction. Also, the threat of criminal conviction at the federal level may be a factor in a noncustodial parent's decision to start making court ordered payments.

John E. Hartwig

As OI's CSE experience increases, its accomplishments can also be expected to increase. In addition, as the federal law enforcement agency with investigative oversight of the CSE program, OI views its efforts as an integral piece of a federal/state partnership and, accordingly, is working in collaboration with other involved federal, state, and local agencies.

Under the authority granted by the Child Support Recovery Act, OI has resources available to locate and prosecute subjects who may be beyond the reach of CSE agencies. Two examples of this: in one case a warrant for arrest from the Eastern District of Virginia was executed in Alaska; in two other cases arrest warrants from the District of Oregon were executed in Hawaii. As the Deputy Inspector General for Investigations said, "You may be able to hide from the State of Virginia by going to Alaska, but there is nowhere in the U.S. to hide from the Federal Government."

While the problem of noncompliance with child support orders is a large one, OI believes that, as an organization, it brings invaluable resources, knowledge, experience, and commitment to a multi-level enforcement partnership. Continued development of this partnership through further collaboration with other federal, state, and local agencies will, OI believes, ensure success.□

John E. Hartwig is the Deputy Inspector General for Investigations in the Office of Investigations, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services.

Child Support Arrest Warrants

By Jeannette R. Gallagher

In Arizona, it is a felony to fail to return a rental car, to walk on another's property without permission, to possess marijuana. Failure to appear at the appointed time in court on such charges will result in an arrest warrant being issued–a warrant that can be served at any hour in any place.

We think the same approach should be used for persons who fail to appear in court on a child support case. Why should a person who has not paid legally obligated child support, perhaps for years, be allowed to evade arrest because he or she is at home, or because it's 3 o'clock in the morning? Yet, until recently, that has been the case.

In 1996, the Arizona legislature, through the passage of Arizona Revised Statute, section 25-681 - 25-684, created the child support arrest warrant. The legislation decreed that persons who fail to appear in court for not paying child support should be treated the same as felons who fail to appear in court.

This means that child support arrest warrants may be served at any time and any place–the same as criminal arrest warrants. In serving these warrants reasonable force may be used to enter any building the person is believed to be in whether it is his or her house or the residence of a friend.

Arizona's legislation decreed that persons who fail to appear in court for not paying child support should be treated the same as felons who fail to appear in court.

Child support arrest warrants, like criminal arrest warrants, are entered into Arizona's State-wide Criminal Justice Information System. If a law enforcement officer in Phoenix, for example, stops a person at any time for a traffic violation and that person is wanted for nonsupport in another Arizona city, the computer will show the outstanding child support warrant and the individual will be arrested.

A feature that sets child support warrants apart from other warrants is this: after arrest but before release from jail, a parent who is delinquent in child support payments must pay the "release amount" set forth in the warrant. This money is not held to secure the person's presence at a future court date. Rather, it is given to the child support agency in IV-D cases or to the family if the case is nonIV-D.

When the release amount is paid, the noncustodial parent is given a new court date. If he or she again fails to appear, a new child support arrest warrant is issued, and the process starts over again.

The advent of child support arrest warrants in Arizona has resulted in hundreds of parents being held accountable for failure to support their children and thousands of dollars being collected on behalf of those children. Arizona recognizes that the failure of parents to pay legally obligated child support is a serious matter–one that must be treated accordingly.

For more information, contact Jenneatte R. Gallagher at (520) 740-5600 or Gail Eskan, Pima County Child Support Office at (520) 770-7826.□

Jenneatte R. Gallagher is Chief of Pima County's Child Advocacy Bureau.

1997 Conference Calendar

Want to know who's meeting, where, and when? Check out the ACF Bulletin Board at (800) 627-8886 where the Calendar is routinely updated. (The Calendar is printed quarterly in *CSR* in January, April, July, and October.)

The Calendar is also accessible through the federal OCSE web site under the "News" section: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/ACFPrograms/CSE/index.html.

If you're planning a meeting and would like to have it listed in the Calendar, call Bertha Hammett at (202) 401-5292 or fax her at (202) 401-5559.□

Cooperative Agreements

Contracting for Law Enforcement Services

The Social Security Act permits each child support enforcement (CSE) state plan to provide for cooperative agreements with courts and law enforcement officials. Cooperative agreements are contracts between state or local CSE agencies and courts or law enforcement officials–district attorneys, attorneys general, local sheriff/police departments, and similar public officials.

Through Federal Financial Participation (FFP), cooperative agreements provide the involved courts, administrative forums, and law enforcement agencies with reimbursement of 66 percent of their reasonable and necessary administrative expenses. Additional revenue, depending on the state's financial structure and performance incentives built into the contract, may also be possible.

The state CSE agency has discretion with respect to the method of calculating eligible expenditures under cooperative agreements. Agreements generally will contain:

- clear organizational relationships;
- clearly defined standards of performance;
- a statement that the parties will comply with title IV-D of the Social Security Act;
- a statement of specific financial arrangements;
- a description of records that must be maintained;
- clear, specific provisions for performance monitoring;
- a provision stating the circumstances under which the agreement may be terminated; and
- a statement regarding the dates on which the agreement begins and ends.

Reimbursable expenses generally include those for:

- establishing paternity and related costs;
- establishing and enforcing support obligations and related costs;
- collecting and distributing support payments and related costs;
- establishing and operating the state parent locator services and related costs;
- establishing and maintaining case records;
- responding to requests for certification of collection of support delinquencies by the Secretary of the Treasury; and
- applying to use the United States District Courts.

Also subject to reimbursement under a cooperative agreement is short term training of court and law enforcement staff assigned on a full or part-time basis to support enforcement functions.

Cooperative agreements provide the involved courts, administrative forums, and law enforcement agencies with reimbursement of 66 percent of their reasonable and necessary administrative expenses.

FFP is not available for the salaries, travel, training, or office costs of judges or their administrative and support staff. Nor is it available for service of process and court filing fees, unless the court or law enforcement agency would normally be required to pay the cost of such fees.

For more detailed information about cooperative agreements, contact Chief Donald A. Deering at (202) 401-1063. □

This abbreviated version of the article, "Child Support Enforcement and Law Enforcement: Better Service to Families through Cooperative Agreements," by OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross, appeared in The Prosecutor, *Volume 31, Number 3, May/June 1997. Used with permission.*

Verifying Military Income

By: Sheck Chin

Q. *How can I verify a service member's income?*

A. Certain information from a service member's payroll account is releasable to enforcement agencies under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). To obtain pay and allowance information, send a letter on your agency letterhead to the appropriate military finance center (see box). Request the information from the two most recent leave and earnings statements.

Be sure to identify the service member's name and Social Security number in the subject line and sign the letter. Other information releasable from the finance centers under FOIA includes: current duty address; next duty station, if available; member's pay grade; years of military service; state of residency (where the member pays his or her state taxes); and current leave balance.

In addition to promotions, when qualified and selected, service members receive pay raises for every two years of military service. For a copy of the 1997 military pay chart, visit "DFAS Lane" at www.dfas.mil/money. For more information contact Sheck Chin at (202) 401-9383.□

Sheck Chin is OCSE's Military Liaison Officer.

Addresses of the Uniformed Services Finance Centers

U.S. Army
Defense Finance Accounting Service
Indianapolis Center
DFAS–IN–U 8899 East 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46249-0150

U.S. Air Force
Defense Finance Accounting Service
Denver Center, DFAS–DE (Code WAD)
6760 East Irvington Place
Denver, CO 80279-8000

U.S. Coast Guard
Commanding Officer
Coast Guard Human Resource
Service and Information Center
444 S.E. Quincy
Topeka, KS 66683-3591

U.S. Marine Corps
Defense Finance Accounting Service
Kansas City Center
DFAS–KC (Code FBL) 1500 East 95th Street
Kansas City, MO 64197-0001

U.S. Navy and all military retirees
Defense Finance Accounting Service
Cleveland Center (Code MLR)
Record Retrieval 1240 East 9th Street
Cleveland, OH 44199-2055□

Deering Appointed Law Enforcement Liaison

OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross has appointed Chief Donald A. Deering to be a liaison between child support enforcement and law enforcement.

Prior to accepting his new responsibilities, Mr. Deering was Chief of Maryland's National Capitol Park Police, where he gained recognition as a leader in community policing and partnership building. He is viewed as an innovative problem solver who can bring diverse individuals and organizations together in pursuit of common goals.

In addition to his law enforcement duties, Chief Deering was a founding board member and vice-president of Advocates for the Homeless, a private nonprofit agency providing transitional housing for single head-of-household families in Frederick County, Maryland, and serves on several local and national law enforcement commissions and boards.

Chief Deering has already visited several states and met with prosecutors, police chiefs, sheriffs, and child support workers. His focus is on building partnerships and laying a foundation for identifying and solving problems through collaboration and coordination.

For more information, contact Chief Donald A. Deering at (202) 401-1063.□

Donald A. Deering

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Venegas Interview

Continued from page 1

CSR: *So you see a relationship between such issues as nonsupport, childhood poverty, nonresidential parents, and juvenile crime?*

CAV: Absolutely. When you have a situation where there's only one parent, usually a woman, and that woman is struggling to support her children in a job that often pays less than what a man would be paid to do the same work, and you have a noncustodial parent who isn't paying his court-ordered support, you have a classic recipe for family and personal breakdown. Law enforcement and other services that enforce child support need to work much more closely in this area than we have in the past to develop a consensus on the most effective approaches to help families.

CSR: *Usually, we tend to think of police responsibilities more in terms of the public safety.*

CAV: In a traditional sense, it is the responsibility of the police to see that the streets are safe, to make sure that our citizens feel secure in and out of their homes, that persons who break the laws are swiftly brought to justice–to keep the peace and to keep order in the community. As chief, I take that responsibility very seriously. At the same time, I see a need to expand the traditional view of police work, to define a new role for the law enforcement community within the larger community.

That new role encompasses an approach to law enforcement that is community oriented. It promotes neighborhood and business revitalization and looks on the total community as a full partner with law enforcement. Without this kind of approach, I believe we'll see a continued deterioration of the quality of life for a large segment of our citizens. Law enforcement must be involved and invested in this effort to make our communities better places to live, better places to raise families and enjoy life.

CSR: *Keeping the streets safe and improving the quality of life for all of our citizens is everybody's responsibility?*

CAV: Yes. This is a philosophy of police work that says, "Don't expect the police–law enforcement–to solve all problems. Problem solving in cities, towns, counties, states–in communities–has to be a police/public partnership. Besides the police, it has to include the district attorneys, ordinary citizens who make up your neighborhood and mine, community leaders, commissions and boards, and the city, county, and state government departments of human services. I'm talking about community based local government that is problem-oriented, focuses on community needs, and brings together in a collaborative effort *all* the groups, organizations, and individuals necessary to solve problems and improve community life.

CSR: *What needs to be done to bring law enforcement and child support enforcement closer together?*

CAV: Education is the big area of need. Police officers need to know more about child support enforcement and how the failure to pay support can have such a negative impact on communities. Over the years, child support enforcement has done a good job of reaching out to and involving parts of the law enforcement community in its deliberations and its practices. The courts, judges, district attorneys all come to mind.

But the local police have never really been approached in a systematic way–never really been invited to the "child support table." I understand some of the reasons for this. And I think that part of the reason why is that we in law enforcement haven't shown a lot of interest in seeking an invitation, in learning more about child support enforcement and how we might become part of a solution to the problem of nonsupport and thereby help our communities become better places to live in. I think we've let some good opportunities to help each other slip by over the years–I mean law enforcement and child support enforcement.

Now, however, it appears we have a chance to recover some of that lost ground. This interview itself seems to point in that direction. Devoting an issue of *Child Support Report* to law enforcement is a strong indicator that the wind has shifted. The upcoming law enforcement conferences, starting in September in San Diego, are more evidence. Let me just say that the education and training of local level law enforcement personnel in child support enforcement is both needed and welcome, and I believe it will be beneficial to both programs. I hope we're seeing only the beginning.

CSR: *Thank you.*□

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Office of Child Support Enforcement
Division of Consumer Services
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Washington D.C. 20447

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Child Support Report

Warrants from the DHHS Office of Investigations Lead to Two Arrests

Arrearages Total More than $85,000

In July, arrest and search warrants executed by Office of Investigation agents of the DHHS Office of the Inspector General, led to the arrest of two noncustodial parents with significant child support arrearages.

Charged in violation of 18 USC 228, the Child Support Recovery Act, the two men, one in California and one in Virginia, had arrearages totaling more than $85,000.

In the California case, the search warrant produced evidence that the subject was financially capable of making child support payments. In the other case, the subject, one of Virginia's "Ten Most Wanted," was the owner of his own contracting business. ☐

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If you have enjoyed this issue of ***Child Support Report****, please pass it on to a co-worker or friend.*

Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement Vol. XIX, No. 10, October 1997

States Meet New Hire Deadline

By: Karen H. Bartlett

The October 1 deadline has been met! Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of the nation's child support community, the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) and the State Directories of New Hires (SDNH) are up and running.

This marks just one milestone for the expanded Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS) as it transitions to a more proactive system.

The acceptance and processing of new hire data represents an enormous amount of effort. The NDNH will do even more when state quarterly wage and unemployment insurance claimant information is submitted, beginning in January of 1998.

These three sources–combined new hire reports, quarterly wage reports, and unemployment insurance claimant information, with its estimated 200 plus million records–will be a rich new data source from which the FPLS will be able to draw.

Under welfare reform legislation, all employers are required to submit new hire information to their SDNH within 20 days of hiring. The new hire information will include the employee's name, social security number, and address, in addition to employer information. The SDNH has five days to enter the data it receives from employers, then three more days to pass it on to the NDNH.

When this data reaches the federal level, it will be less than one month old, by far the most current locate information available to OCSE.

In states with new hire programs that predate welfare reform, the addresses supplied have proven to be very valuable to the child support effort. Besides wage withholding, states also have reported that–thanks to new hire data–a large number of putative fathers have been located.

Between now and October 1, 1998, when the expanded FPLS will be fully operational, the data in NDNH will be used in matches against cases currently in the Tax Refund Offset Program and will be a data source for cases submitted through the normal FPLS procedures. States may submit individual locate requests or tapes of their entire caseload to take advantage of the employment and wage information now residing in FPLS.

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U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

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In October 1998, the Federal Case Registry (FCR) will be operational. The FCR will contain the case registry from each state. Daily matches will occur between the NDNH and the FCR, and states will be notified of matches. This is the new proactive feature which will be the hallmark of the expanded FPLS–states will receive information before it is requested.

When this new hire data reaches the federal level, it will be less than one month old, by far the most current locate information available to OCSE.

States will still be able to submit cases for locate to the FPLS, and such locate requests will be run against not only the NDNH and the FCR, but also against the databases supplied by other agencies.

Be sure to check out the new hire reporting section on the OCSE website (http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/). Click on the new hire reporting portion of the Facts and Information line.

Have a burning question about new hire reporting and the expanded FPLS? Call the Expanded FPLS information line at (202) 401-9267.□

Karen Bartlett is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Division of Program Operations.

More Arrests Under Child Support Recovery Act

In August, investigating agents of the DHHS Office of the Inspector General reported 6 arrests under the Child Support Recovery Act (see September '97 *CSR*). The defendants–located in California, Indiana, Iowa, New York, and North Carolina–owe more than $260,000 in back support.□

Payroll Association Supports New Hire Provisions

Speaking to the American Payroll Association during National Payroll Week '97, OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross called employers the "silent partners of child support enforcement" and praised their contribution to the financial well-being of America's children.

The American Payroll Association has 14,000 employer-members and is committed to educating them and the public about the mutual responsibilities borne by employers and government agencies. Its goals include:

- working collaboratively with government agencies to publicize the importance of their mandates and the role of employers in helping to meet those mandates;
- enhancing employer understanding of the need for providing accurate and timely reporting of child support information;
- providing outreach and support to employers to help them comply with requirements of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform); and
- assisting businesses in understanding the importance of new hire reporting as a tool for child support enforcement.□

October 1 Due Dates Under Welfare Reform

The long awaited October 1 date is here and gone, and with it numerous provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform) became effective. Below is a list, that includes brief descriptions, of those sections of welfare reform that became effective on October 1, 1997.

Section 303 Privacy safeguards

States must have safeguards in place against unauthorized use or disclosure of confidential information and must prohibit release of one party's location to the other where a protective order has been entered or if the state has reason to believe that release may result in physical or emotional harm to another person.

304 Rights to notification hearings

States must notify parties of all proceedings in which support might be established or modified and, within 14 days, provide parents with copies of any orders or determinations.

313 State new hire directory

States that did not have a new hire law in effect when welfare reform legislation was enacted must operate a state directory of new hires. All states must furnish new hire reports to the National Directory of New Hires.

- **Employer reporting**

Employers–including private, government, and labor organizations–must report to the state on a W-4 (or, at the option of the employer, an equivalent form) within the timeframe required by the state, which is not later than 20 days after hire or twice a month if reporting electronically or magnetically. Federal Government reports must include employee name, address, and Social Security number, as well as employer name, address, and identification number.

Multi-state employers

For reporting of all new hire data, multi-state employers that transmit reports electronically or magnetically may designate one state where they have employees, and they must notify DHHS of which state they have chosen. A list will be maintained in the National Directory of New Hires.

Fines

States may impose fines which shall not exceed $25 for each failure to report on noncomplying employers, or $500 if employer and employee have conspired to avoid reporting or filed a false or incomplete report.

- **State reporting to national directory**

States must enter data within five days of receipt from employers and transmit data to the National Directory of New Hires within three days of data entry. States must also send withholding notices to employers within two days of data entry.

- **Sharing of new hire data**

New hire data shall be used for location and may be disclosed to contractors of the IV-D agency (pursuant to privacy safeguards). State agencies administering unemployment, workers compensation, welfare, Medicaid, Food Stamp, and other specified programs shall have access to state new hire information.

316 Employer/employee information

FPLS shall transmit employer and employee information in the National Directory of New Hires to the Social Security Administration to the extent necessary to verify, correct, or supply Social Security numbers, and dates of birth.

361 IRS fees

No additional fees may be imposed for adjustments to amounts previously certified to the IRS for the same obligor.

370 Denial of passports

Passports shall be denied and may be revoked or limited for nonpayment of more than $5,000 in support upon certification by the state and the Secretary of DHHS.□

Consumer Information

In a continuing effort to reach out to other organizations and individuals with an interest in child support enforcement, OCSE has made its *Handbook on Child Support Enforcement* available through the U.S. General Services Administration Consumer Information Center in Pueblo, Colorado. For a copy of the *Handbook*, or for information about other free, or low-cost, consumer publications on children, health, employment, and related topics, call the Center at (719) 948-4000.□

Family Closeness Protects Adolescents

Why is providing financial and emotional support to children important? A recent study indicates that adolescent well-being is influenced not only by the strengths and vulnerabilities of individual adolescents but also by the character of the settings in which they lead their lives. *Reducing the Risk: Connections that Make a Difference in the Lives of Youth*, summarizes the first analyses from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health–the largest and most comprehensive study of youth health ever undertaken in America.

Time and time again, the home environment emerges as central in shaping health outcomes for American youth.

The report finds that parent and family connectedness–a high degree of closeness, caring, and satisfaction with parental relationships, whether resident or nonresident mother or father, and a feeling of being understood, loved, wanted, and paid attention to by family members–protects adolescents against a variety of health risks.

Time and time again, the home environment emerges as central in shaping health outcomes for American youth. Controlling for the number of parents in a household, for whether families are rich or poor, and for race and ethnicity–children who report feeling connected to a parent are protected against many health risks, including: emotional distress and suicidal thoughts and attempts; cigarette, alcohol, and marijuana use; violent behavior; and early sexual activity.

More information on The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health is available on the Internet: http://www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth.□

Excerpted from Blum, R.W., Rinehart, P.M., Reducing the risk: Connections that make a difference in the lives of youth. Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health, University of Minnesota, Box 721, 420 Delaware St., S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455.

International News...

Ireland First U.S. Federal Reciprocating Nation

By: Stephen Grant

The Secretary of State and the Secretary of Health and Human Services have made their first exercise of the new federal international child support enforcement reciprocity designation authority.

Part of welfare reform, section 459A of title IV-D of the Social Security Act authorizes the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, to determine that a foreign country has established, or has undertaken to establish, support enforcement procedures available at no cost to residents of the United States.

These services must include the establishment of paternity and support orders for children and custodial parents, enforcement of support orders, and collection and distribution of support payments under such orders.

Effective September 10, 1997, Ireland was declared to be a foreign reciprocating country with all U.S. jurisdictions for child support enforcement. The Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs previously had issued a declaration of reciprocity with all U.S. jurisdictions, effective May 1, 1996 (see March '97 *CSR*).

Prior to that, on November 23, 1994, the Irish government had passed the "Maintenance Act, 1994," setting up an interstate child support system similar to that established by URESA and UIFSA in the U.S., and authorizing the Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs to designate qualifying jurisdictions for reciprocity.

Requests for services may be sent to Ms. Elizabeth Sheehan, Central Authority for Maintenance Recovery, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 43-49 Mespil Road, Dublin 4, Ireland. This department employs lawyers in Ireland's twenty-six county law centers who will provide, without a means test, free support enforcement services for foreign child support applicants.

For further information about the Ireland reciprocity declaration or other international child support matters, contact Stephen Grant at (202) 260-5943.□

Stephen Grant is OCSE's International Child Support Officer.

Canada Passes New Child Support Laws

Recognizing a need for fundamental change, the Government of Canada recently passed new laws which establish child support guidelines for calculating the amount of child support. The new child support laws include additional federal enforcement measures to help Canada's ten provincial and two territorial governments ensure that family support obligations are respected.

The Department of Justice Canada continues to work closely with the provincial and territorial governments to coordinate a national approach to child support reforms, as both levels of government are responsible for certain areas of child support.

Designed to ensure a process in which children get appropriate and consistent child support from both parents following divorce, the guidelines help to reduce conflict and the need for lengthy negotiations regarding the amount of child support.

The guidelines are but one part of a broad range of activities being undertaken across Canada to strengthen maintenance enforcement.

The guidelines amount is a fixed percentage of the noncustodial parent's income before taxes and is based on the average cost of raising a child, as well as the capacity of the noncustodial parent to pay child support. The number of children for whom child support is being determined and the province or territory in which the noncustodial parent lives are also factors that are considered.

Separate child support tables for each province and territory reflect the slight differences in taxes in different parts of the country.

Under the guidelines, child support amounts can be adjusted in special circumstances to recognize a child's particular expenses or to prevent financial hardship for a parent or child. For example, more child support might be appropriate to cover child care costs where these costs are reasonable and necessary. Or, less child support might be appropriate where the paying parent has a new family and has a lower standard of living than the parent receiving child support.

The guidelines are but one part of the Canadian Government's child support initiatives. In addition, a broad range of activities are being undertaken across Canada to strengthen maintenance enforcement. The federal government will now be able to provide provincial enforcement programs with expanded access to federal databanks, including Revenue Canada. Federal funding is also being provided for a wide variety of initiatives to strengthen and coordinate enforcement efforts.

To aid in the provincial/territorial enforcement of support and to motivate parents to pay their support, a federal license denial plan has been established. At the request of a provincial or territorial enforcement agency, the federal government will suspend or withhold passports and specific federal aviation and marine licenses issued to persons who have failed to meet their support obligations and who are in persistent arrears.

The enforcement agency must show that other enforcement measures have been tried without success and that the debtor has failed to meet his or her support obligations for three payment periods or has accumulated arrears of at least $3,000. The enforcement agency must also notify the individual in arrears that it intends to make a request for license denial so that he or she has the opportunity to make arrangements for payment with the provincial or territorial enforcement agency.

The Department of Justice Canada has been monitoring the implementation of the new laws since they came into effect on May 1, 1997, and within five years must provide Parliament with the results of a comprehensive review of the provisions and operations of the guidelines and the determination of child support under the Divorce Act. This review will be undertaken in close consultation and collaboration with officials from the provinces and territories.

A guide to the new child support guidelines is available and may be obtained by calling, tollfree, 1-8888-373-2222. Information is also available on the Internet at: http://canada.justice.go.ca.□

Judge Ross Testifies on Systems

On September 10, 1997, OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross testified before the Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, U.S. House of Representatives. His remarks focused on two critical program areas: states' automated systems and development of a new incentive structure.

Seventeen states have been certified as having computerized systems which are comprehensive and statewide.

The following is a summary of his presentation.

State Child Support Automated Systems

With a current national caseload of 20 million, computerized systems are the only means to provide both prompt and reliable processing of information. Automation:

- allows either a worker to initiate a case or the system automatically to initiate it for families receiving public assistance;
- begins locating absent parents and tracks automated searches of state databases, such as the Department of Motor Vehicles, and refers hard-to-find cases to the Federal Parent Locator Service;
- tracks, monitors, and reports on efforts to establish paternity and support orders;
- accepts and processes case updates and keeps the caseworker informed about due dates and activities;
- monitors compliance with support orders and initiates enforcement actions, such as wage withholding or tax refund offset;
- bills cases, processes payments, and makes disbursements; and
- maintains information for accounting, reporting, and monitoring.

Required safeguards enable states to ensure that all of this information is secure and held in the strictest privacy.

Currently, seventeen states have been certified as having computerized systems which are comprehensive and statewide (see back page for listing). Many other states are very close to completion.

Incentive Funding

The revenue neutral incentive funding proposal, jointly developed by OCSE and state directors of child support enforcement programs (see April, '97 *CSR*) will encourage states to improve performance. The incentive formula rewards states for their performance in five critical areas: paternity establishment, support order establishment, collections on current support, collections on past due support, and cost effectiveness. The formula has broad support among the states and child support enforcement stakeholders and will ensure positive outcomes for families.

Under the proposal, performance standards determine the amount of incentive a state will receive for a certain level of performance. States are rewarded for maintaining high performance or substantially improving performance.

Paternity establishment, support order establishment, and collections on current support are the most critical areas for which performance is measured, so states earn a higher incentive on these than on collections on arrearages and cost effectiveness.

To help states prepare for the new system, OCSE recommends that the formula be phased in over two years. This will give states more time to adjust their programs, budget for any financial impact, and improve their performance. And during this period OCSE will continue to provide assistance.

By following this route, in fiscal year 2000 a state would earn half of what it would have earned under the old incentive formula and half under the new calculation. In fiscal year 2001, the new formula would be fully implemented. □

Editor's Note: On September 16, Secretary Shalala and Florida Representative Clay Shaw held a joint press conference to announce that legislation on incentive funding had been introduced in the Congress. This legislation closely parallels the jointly developed OCSE/State Directors' incentive funding proposal.

Conference Calendar

The Calendar is printed quarterly in *CSR* in January, April, July, and October. If you are planning a meeting or conference and would like it to be included in the Calendar, please call OCSE's Bertha Hammett at (202) 401-5292 or fax her at (202) 401-5559. The Calendar is accessible through the Federal OCSE web site under the "News" section: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/ACFPrograms/CSE/index/html.

The listing is also available on the OCSE Section of ACF's Bulletin Board at (800) 627-8886.

October

8-10 *Maryland Joint Child Support Conference,* Princess Royale Hotel, Ocean City, MD, Donna Sims (410) 767-7876.

9-10 *Child Support Symposium for Law Enforcement Executives,* Holiday Inn Riverwalk, San Antonio, TX, Donald Deering (202) 401-1063.

13-14 *NCSEA Meeting on Welfare Reform,* Denver Hilton South, Denver, CO, Holly Powell (202) 624-8180.

14-17 *California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting,* Hyatt Regency Alicant, Anaheim, CA, Noanne J. St. Jean (209) 582-3211 X2403.

19-21 *Illinois Family Support Enforcement Assn. Conference,* Clock Tower Inn, Rockford, IL, Tom Sweeney (217) 384-3850.

20-21 *Region X IV-D Directors' Meeting,* Regional Office, Blanchard Plaza, Seattle, WA, Roberta Harrison (206) 615-2552 X 3112.

21-24 *Missouri CSE Association Annual Conference,* Lodge of Four Seasons, Osage Beach, MO, Dan Pingelton (573) 449-5091.

22-24 *Michigan Family Support Council Statewide Training Conference,* Holiday Inn South/Convention Center, Lansing, MI, Terry Novakoski (616) 336-2618.

26-28 *NCSEA UIFSA Training,* Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sacramento, CA, Holly Powell (202) 624-8180.

28-30 *Interstate Retreat (UIFSA III and One-State Interstate II),* Howard Johnson Hotel, Albuquerque, NM, Dianne Offett (202) 401-5425 or Jean Robinson (202) 401-5330.

November

2-5 *Administration for Children and Families Users' Conference,* Downtown Ramada Inn, Topeka, KS, Mike Purcell (913) 296-5427 or Robin Rushton (202) 690-1244.

13-14 *Child Support Symposium for Law Enforcement Executives,* Historic Inns, Annapolis, MD, Donald Deering (202) 401-1063.

13-14 *Ohio Judicial Retreat,* Salt Fork State Park, Cambridge, OH, Invitation Only, Barb Saunders (614) 752-6561.

16-18 *Review and Adjustment of Child Support Orders,* Regal Riverfront Hotel, St. Louis, MO, Jeff Ball (202) 401-5427.

17-19 *Bi-Regional (IX & X) Domestic Violence Conference,* Double Tree Hotel, Lloyd Center, Portland, OR, George Lund (206) 615-2552 X 3053.

December

1-3 *12th Annual Tennessee Conference on Child Support,* Sheraton Music City Hotel, Nashville, TN, Gladys Gillespie (615) 313-4880.

2-5 *Centralized Collections Conference,* Westin Hotel, Atlanta, GA, Gina Barbaro (202) 401-5426.

4-5 *NCSEA Domestic Violence Workshop (IV-A/IV-D Cooperation),* Hyatt Regency, Austin, TX, Holly Powell (202) 624-8180.

6-10 *APWA National Council of State Human Service Administrators, Winter Meeting,* Ana Hotel, San Francisco, CA, Doris Pollard (202) 682-0100.

8 *APWA Child Support Committee,* Ana Hotel, San Francisco, CA, Doris Pollard (202) 682-0100.

10-12 *16th Annual New Jersey Child Support Conference, "Partners in Change,"* Trump Plaza Hotel & Casino, Atlantic City, NJ, Eileen Couglin (609) 588-2385.

January 1998

26-28 *NCSEA Mid-Year Policy Forum and Conference,* Washington Hilton and Towers, Washington, DC, Holly Powell (202) 624-8180.

February

16-20 *California Family Support Council Annual Meeting,* Hyatt Regency, S.F. Airport, San Francisco, CA, Noanne St. Jean (209) 582-3211 X2403. □

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Office of Child Support Enforcement
Division of Consumer Services
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Child Support Report

States with Certified Statewide Automated Systems

As of September 20, 1997, in the order of their certification.

1. Montana
2. Delaware
3. Georgia
4. Virginia
5. Washington
6. West Virginia
7. Arizona
8. Utah
9. Connecticut
10. Wyoming
11. Mississippi
12. Louisiana
13. New Hampshire
14. Idaho
15. Colorado
16. Oklahoma
17. Wisconsin. ☐

Child Support Report
Vol. XIX No. 10
October 1997

Child Support Report is a publication of the Office of Child Support Enforcement, Division of Consumer Services

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Deputy Director, OCSE
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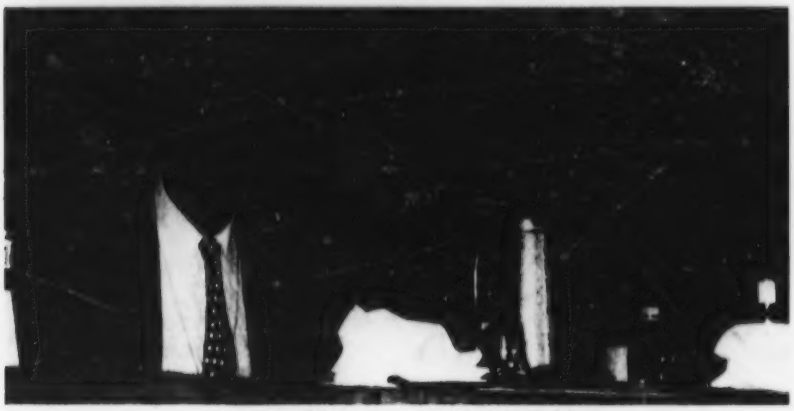
Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XIX, No. 11, November 1997

OCSE 7th National Training Conference Looks to New Era



David Gray Ross and Olivia Golden

OCSE's Seventh National Training Conference, held September 15-17, in Alexandria, Virginia, drew more than 500 participants to reflect on "Child Support's New Era: Strengthening Agencies to Strengthen Families."

Keeping in mind the results of a recent training needs assessment (see April '97 *CSR*), the conference planning committee presented plenary sessions and workshops emphasizing technology, partnership, training, technical assistance, and management. State-of-the-art satellite and computer–based training (CBT) technology were featured in several workshops.

OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross led off the conference, saying, "We have seen what we can do as partners. We have exceeded what at one time were thought to be impossible goals for our program, and we see the potential now, as never before, of information sharing, automation, and cooperation. Working together, learning from each other, taking advantage of the great benefits of technology, I am absolutely confident of our success in serving America's children and families."

Continued on page 2

New Hire Directory Off to Fast Start

Within days of becoming operational, the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) received over 954,000 records of newly hired employees. The NDNH's on-time start-up (see October '97 *CSR*) and auspicious beginning is the result of a partnership of employers, state and federal agencies, legislators, associations, and the private sector.

OCSE extends thanks to all for this outstanding success!

Over 30 percent of child support cases involve parents who do not live in the same state as their children. With new hire information, we will now be able, in many cases, to carry out a locate before a move is made to the next job or the next state.

It is estimated that the new hire program will increase national child support collections by $6.4 billion over the next 10 years.

For more information on the NDNH, contact the Federal Parent Locate Service Information Line at (202) 401-9267. Or use the Internet–http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse). □

PS 4164

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

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Conference

Continued from page 1

Olivia Golden, ACF Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, outlined three challenges faced by child support enforcement:

- to play a part in the effort to help families become self-sufficient;
- to work with the TANF and child care programs to help low-income families get and keep jobs; and
- to build new links with Head Start, TANF, and Child Care, as well as with banks and financial institutions, and law enforcement.

"Child support has always mattered," she said, but it has become even more important "because child support is now the only national safety net for children."

One plenary session looked at how technology is used in child support communities to enhance communications, increase training outreach, and keep CSE in touch with the world. A workshop on technology gave participants an opportunity to use authoring software to develop their own CBT packages.

Partnership was a theme of several workshops. Examples: employer outreach for new hire reporting; achieving self-sufficiency through TANF-child support interface; financial institutions-the newest partners in child support; and collaborating with other programs-what's happening and how to do it.

Luncheon speaker Barbara Harrison, an anchor with NBC's Channel 4 News affiliate in Washington, DC, provided a media perspective on child support enforcement and spoke eloquently about the critical importance of children receiving emotional and financial support from both parents. Noncustodial parents under court order for support "must be held accountable," she said, but it is "equally important," she continued, "for us to balance our concern about who will pay for children by showing an equal concern for who will love them."

A state participant summed up the conference for many: "We've never had so many options and opportunities before us. It's up to us as trainers to get the most out of them. Conferences like this one help us keep our focus on what's really important in our work."

For more information on OCSE's 7th National Conference, contact the National Training Center's Mae Rowlett at (202) 401-3443.□

NBC's Barbara Harrison delivering conference luncheon address.

> *"It is important for us to balance our concern about who will pay for children by showing an equal concern for who will love them."*
>
> *.....Barbara Harrison*

A Special Thanks

OCSE's National Training Center expresses special thanks to the National CSE Training Workgroup members who contributed to the Seventh National Conference.

Technology subgroup members used satellite electronic technology to connect with programs in Texas, New Mexico, West Virginia, and Oklahoma. They also coordinated/moderated workshops that demonstrated how to deliver distance learning, how to use the Internet to enhance the CSE program, and how to get technology into the workplace.

Training and curriculum subgroup members developed workshops geared towards management personnel, with topics such as working under pressure; personality-driven leadership (using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicators); and external customers–which demonstrated how to partner effectively with an agency's clients, vendors, and stakeholders.□

New Training Initiatives in OCSE

Three major training-related activities are under way in the National Training Center (NTC) of OCSE's Division of State and Local Assistance.

These initiatives continue our resolve to provide states with the best in training.

An agreement has been entered into with the Graduate School of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (GS/USDA). An outcome of NTC's training needs assessment (see April '97 *CSR*), the agreement calls for GS/USDA to conduct national research and complete a report which recommends distance learning methods that can be used most effectively in the child support community; to design six computer-based training (CBT) courses; and to design two federal training courses to be conducted via satellite.

NTC's Charlene Butler is the Project Officer (202) 401-5091.

The National Center for State Courts has been awarded a contract to conduct an Invitational National Symposium targeted for State Chief Justices, court administrators, and IV-D managers. The Symposium will focus on the role of state courts in child support enforcement, with an emphasis on the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform).

NTC's Amy Gober is the Project Officer (202) 401-4965.

An interagency agreement has been entered into with the State Justice Institute. The Institute will work with Service Design Associates to develop interactive CBT courses on the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act, with an accompanying benchbook for judges.

NTC's branch chief Yvette Riddick is the Project Officer (202) 401-4885.

"The start-up of these initiatives," Riddick said, "continues our resolve to provide states with the best in training materials and technology."

For more information call Yvette Riddick at (202) 401-4885.□

Low Income Noncustodial Parents Eligible for Job Training

Funding Totals $3 Billion

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997, signed by the President on August 5, 1997, makes formula grant funds available to states for welfare–to–work initiatives.

This legislation has importance for child support because *its target group includes noncustodial parents* of minors whose custodial parents are long-term welfare recipients who face termination from TANF within 12 months and have specified labor market deficiencies.

The legislation seeks to move hard-to-employ TANF recipients with significant employment barriers into unsubsidized jobs offering long-term employment opportunities.

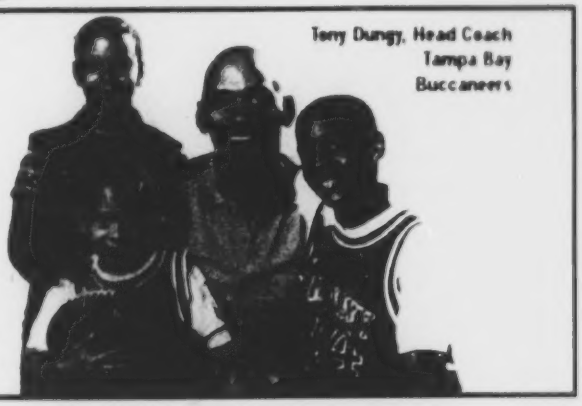
Under the legislation, the Department of Labor is authorized to provide Welfare-to-Work (WtW) grants to states and local communities for transitional employment assistance to move hard-to-employ TANF recipients with significant employment barriers into unsubsidized jobs offering long-term employment opportunities.

Funding totals $3 billion–$1.5 billion each in fiscal year 1998 and 1999. For more information, contact the Department of Labor's Stephanie Curtis at (202) 208-7933, X 161.□

NFL Continues Campaign for Kids

Don't Drop the Ball

Pay Your Child Support


Tony Dungy, Head Coach
Tampa Bay
Buccaneers

Three Florida National Football League (NFL) teams recently were presented "Florida's Finest" Certificates of Appreciation by Governor Lawton Chiles. The award is presented in recognition of significant dedication and devotion to the common good of Florida.

The Jacksonville Jaguars, Miami Dolphins, and Tampa Bay Buccaneers were recognized for "helping to make a difference" for Florida's children through their work in the nationwide CSE/NFL publicity campaign. (See February '96 and June '97 *CSR*.) For a sample television public service announcement by Tampa Bay Buccaneers Head Coach Tony Dungy, see below.□

T.V. Script–Tony Dungy, Tampa Bay Buccaneers

Fade up, music under.

I'm Tony Dungy, head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Being a head coach in the NFL is a big responsibility. But being a parent is an even bigger responsibility.

It means getting involved with your kids, doing your part, and providing for their needs.

Your support can make a big difference in their lives.

When you're a parent, there's no penalty for holding. Your children depend on you for support in a lot of ways. So don't drop the ball!

Cut to graphic, announcer voice over.

Make a difference. Pay your child support. It's the law.□

New Access and Visitation Grants

On October 3, DHHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala announced the award of $10 million in grants to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and territories to promote access and visitation of children by their noncustodial parents (see March '97 *CSR*).

There is a minimum allotment of $50,000 per state for fiscal year 1997. Funds for the new program are part of the welfare reform legislation.

"Involvement of both parents is essential to the well-being of our nation's children," said OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross. "These grants will encourage the safe and supportive contact of parents with their children."

States have flexibility in designing and operating the access and visitation projects. Activities can include–but are not limited to–mediation, counseling, education, development of parenting plans, visitation enforcement, and development of guidelines for visitation and alternative custody arrangements.

The grants may be used to create or enhance state-run programs, or to fund grants or contracts with courts, local public agencies, or nonprofit private entities. Programs do not have to operate statewide. Designated state agencies include Governors' offices, offices of the Attorneys General, social service agencies, child support enforcement offices, and courts.

For more information, contact David Arnaudo at (202) 401-5364.□

Grants Awarded to Test Child Support Innovations

DHHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala has announced the award of $1.5 million in demonstration grants to states for funding of innovative projects to improve the nation's child support enforcement program.

Twenty five grants were awarded to 17 states (see box). "Under the new welfare law," the Secretary said, "we are committed to giving states the opportunity and necessary flexibility to test innovative approaches to help America's children." After consultation with states and the child support enforcement (CSE) and research communities, OCSE identified key areas to encourage innovation.

"We are committed to giving states the opportunity . . . to test innovative approaches."

.....Secretary Shalala

Grant amounts awarded are 29 percent of a total project's budget and are matched with 66 percent federal funds for child support expenditures and 5 percent of state funds. The total funds are in excess of $5 million.

Projects will test a variety of approaches, including:

- cooperation with CSE requirements by applicants for and recipients of TANF;
- new models for coping with domestic violence in the context of CSE;
- models of collaboration between CSE, Head Start, and Child Care programs at the state and local levels;
- collaborations to facilitate family preservation between CSE and Child Welfare programs;
- reviewing and adjusting child support orders;
- determining the effect of child support collections on welfare recipient income; and
- models for making the CSE program responsive to the needs of low-income noncustodial fathers to encourage greater parental responsibility. □

Innovative Grant Awards

New approaches to noncooperation with CSE requirements:

Illinois	$56,150
Minnesota	59,600
New York	187,640

New models of cooperation with CSE requirements and coping with domestic violence:

Massachusetts	$34,078
Missouri	38,896

CSE, Child Care, and Head Start collaboration:

Alaska	$30,491
Connecticut	66,862
Illinois	63,318
Maryland	22,030
Minnesota	46,110
Missouri	29,015

CSE collaboration with child welfare:

South Carolina	$17,998

New arrangements for reviewing and adjusting child support orders:

Alaska	$63,069
Maine	67,294
Oklahoma	38,382
Vermont	72,500

The effect of child support collections on welfare recipient income:

Minnesota	$29,000

New models on noncustodial parents and their relationship to CSE:

California	$72,500
Colorado	72,500
Maryland	78,667
Massachusetts	72,500
Missouri	43,738
Oregon	72,500
New Hampshire	24,928
Wisconsin	72,500 □

FYI: Census Bureau Report–America's Children At Risk

There are many indicators that put children's well-being at risk. The Census Bureau is directed by welfare reform legislation to monitor the impact of welfare reform on the well-being of children.

As part of this effort, the Bureau has just released a report entitled "America's Children at Risk." Based on findings from the March, 1996, Current Population Survey, the report looks at how American children are doing in relation to six identified risk factors:

- poverty;
- welfare dependence;
- the absence of both parents;
- one-parent families;
- unwed mothers; and
- having a parent who has not graduated from high school.

According to the report, about half of America's 16-and 17-year-olds confront risks such as poverty, welfare dependence, or the absence of one or both parents, that make them more likely to face adversity later in life. Findings:

- Those who experience some of the six risk factors are more likely than those without them to experience adversity;
- Those with more risk factors are more likely than those with fewer to have to deal with adverse outcomes; and
- Children in this age group who face these risks are more likely to wind up out of school and out of work. Girls are more likely to become teenage mothers.

"The presence of a risk factor does not doom a child to a particular outcome," said Ken Bryson, author of the report. "Many children face these risk factors and go on to successful lives. But experiencing more risk factors makes the transition from childhood to adulthood more difficult."

The two-page report (document number 1251) is available from the Census Bureau's Public Information Office at 1-888-206-6463, or on the Internet at http://www.census.gov/prod/www/titles.html#cenbrief.□

NJ Teens Learn About Paternity and Responsibility

By Joe Travea

To include teen views on pregnancy and parental responsibility, New Jersey's Office of Child Support and Paternity Programs sponsors an annual media contest for high school students. The purpose is to encourage them to send a message to other students about pregnancy prevention and parental responsibility.

The contest challenges students to develop imaginative, thought-provoking, and visually attractive materials on teen pregnancy and parental responsibility which will catch the attention of other students.

Students are invited to create messages for a variety of media, including video and radio public service announcements, artwork, photos, and posters.

In this year's contest, Cristina Pardo of the Visual Performing Arts High School of Jersey City, earned top honors in the artwork category. Her winning entry has already been illustrated on a poster funded by the New Jersey Division of Family Development.

The poster (see below) is part of a campaign to educate the public about New Jersey's Paternity Opportunity Program, which stresses the importance of voluntary paternity acknowledgment. For more information contact Joe Travea at (609) 588-2356.□

Joe Travea is a Child Support Specialist in New Jersey's Office of Child Support and Paternity Programs.

Show Your Child You Care...
Sign For Your Right To Be There

If You Are Not Married,
Your Child Doesn't Have A Legal Father
Unless
You Sign A Certificate of Parentage

Technical Assistance Branch Delivers

By: Susan Notar

In its first year of operation, OCSE's Division of State and Local Assistance's Technical Assistance (TA) Branch (see March '97 *CSR*), in coordination with other central and regional office units, has provided a variety of assistance to states. Examples:

One-State Interstate Retreat, Providence, Rhode Island, April 14-16, 1997

This was a forum for in-depth discussions about the interpretation of various provisions of the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act and welfare reform, including: direct income withholding, administrative enforcement, interstate lien implementation, administrative subpoenas, long-arm service of process, electronic hearings and evidence, and two-state discovery. A report from the retreat with recommended practices and best practices has been issued. *Contact: Diane Offett (202) 401-5425.*

Paternity Establishment Forum, Chicago, Illinois, April 23-25, 1997

A group of 30 participants from six states, including vital records staff, discussed issues related to federal financial participation for paternity establishment efforts and examples of formal records between IV-D agencies and vital records agencies and hospitals. *Contact: Ann Slayton (202) 401-9380.*

Cooperation/Good Cause Forum, Alexandria, Virginia, February 11-12, 1997

This forum brought together experts representing IV-D, TANF, Medicaid, advocacy groups, and scholars to discuss the implications of the new cooperation/good cause requirements of welfare reform (particularly as they relate to domestic violence), suggest areas in need of technical assistance and policy guidance, and learn from state innovations already in place. A forum report is available both in hard copy and on the Internet. *Contact: Susan Notar (202) 401-4606.*

Welfare Reform Child Support Enforcement Resource Persons List, Spring, 1997

This "specialized rolodex" assembles the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of a dozen federal, regional, and state workers who are knowledgeable about and available to discuss the child support enforcement sections of the welfare reform legislation. *Contact: Duke Wilson (202) 260-5981.*

Best Practices Compendium

This compilation of innovative state child support enforcement practices is issued regularly by OCSE. The Third Edition is currently available from the National Reference Center; a Fourth Edition is in preparation. *Contact: Duke Wilson (202) 260-5981.*

Child Support Monographs on Techniques for Effective Management of Program Operations (TEMPOs)

In FY '98, OCSE is expected to renew publication of TEMPOs, periodic monographs targeted to front-line case workers that explore various issues of current concern to child support practitioners. *Contact: Duke Wilson (202) 260-5981.*

Electronic Resource Center

Starting in FY '98, this will provide states and regional offices with access to federal and state child support enforcement documents on-line via the Internet. *Contact: Susan Greenblatt (202) 401-4849.*

Enforcement

Beginning in FY '98, the TA Branch will focus resources on helping states implement the new enforcement tools of welfare reform, including liens, license revocation and suspension, financial institution data matches, and expedited processes. *Contact: Sheila LeBlanc (202) 401-4974.*

Holistic Family Formation

Starting in FY '98, this project will work with inner city community-based organizations in developing and using approaches that seek to bring fathers together with their families. Services and counseling will include the understanding that paternity is to be established and support paid regularly. *Contact: Bomani Ajamu (202) 401-5262.*

For more information about Technical Assistance Branch activities, contact Susan Notar at (202) 401-4606.□

Susan Notar is an Attorney in OCSE's Division of State and Local Assistance.

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Dad's Involvement: Better Grades for Kids

Children are more likely to get mostly A's and less likely to repeat a grade or be expelled if fathers are highly involved in their schools, according to a recent study by the U.S. Department of Education, "Fathers Involved in Their Children's School."

The findings hold whether the fathers live with their children or whether mothers also are active.

Involvement is defined as participation in school meetings, a teacher conference, a class meeting or volunteering. High involvement is participation in three or four activities.

The study, based on interviews with parents and guardians of almost 17,000 students in early 1996, found that in two-parent households where both were highly involved:

- 51 percent of the children got mostly A's;
- 48 percent did so when only the father was highly involved;
- 44 percent did when just the mother was highly involved;
- 27 percent got mostly A's if neither parent was very involved.
- 31 percent of children with highly involved fathers got mostly A's even when the father was a noncustodial parent.

For a free copy of the study, call the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800 USA LEARN. ☐

Child Support Report
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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement Vol. XIX, No. 12, December 1997

Locating Noncustodial Parents in San Diego

By: Susan Green

In February, 1997, with the clock ticking on the continued receipt of cash welfare benefits, the San Diego County District Attorney's Office began a pilot project to determine the value of re-interviewing each of 20,000 San Diego aid recipients for whom a child support order had not been established. Dubbed "Project Locate," 500 custodial parents were summoned each week to attend a 15 minute group orientation followed by a personal interview with a newly-hired law school graduate.

The objective was to determine whether new information could be obtained which would enable the District Attorney to locate the noncustodial parent and establish an order for support.

Three factors seemed to weigh in favor of the project's success:

- the consequences of welfare reform would increase the motivation of the custodial parent to provide needed information;
- changes in technology have resulted in greater access to key data sources used in the locate process; and
- hiring recent law school graduates to interview the custodial parents guaranteed a pool of skilled, motivated employees.

The pilot proved so successful that the project has been expanded. Currently, eight orientations are given daily, with 50 appointments scheduled for each. At these orientations, the consequences of welfare reform are discussed and the need to find the noncustodial parent stressed. Individuals are then shown to semi-private offices for one-on-one interviews with graduate law clerks.

With on-line access to California's Department of Motor Vehicles, credit reporting agencies, and other data sources, the law clerk works with the custodial parent to identify the noncustodial parent's address and Social Security number. These two pieces of information are vital if a child support order is to be obtained and subsequently enforced.

Although interviews are scheduled for all aid recipients, only about 40 percent actually appear. If an individual does not–or cannot–come to the District Attorney's office for an interview, an attempt is made to obtain the information by phone.

If contact still is not made, or the custodial parent refuses to provide any information, a report of noncooperation is made to the Department of Social Services.

More than 1,300 aid recipients have been reported by this process.

Continued on page 2

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

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My View

David Gray Ross

Another year has quickly passed–my fourth as OCSE's Deputy Director–and I want to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all of you who have worked so hard to make the program a success.

As many of you know, the Child Support Enforcement Program is guided by long-term strategic goals developed in partnership with the states. These goals seek to ensure that:

- All children have their parentage established;
- All children in IV-D cases have financial and medical support orders; and
- All children in IV-D cases receive financial and medical support from both parents.

In working to achieve these goals we rely on the dedication and commitment of those of you on the front lines of service delivery–all 56,000 of you.

The CSE Program is guided by long-term strategic goals developed in partnership with the states.

Without you, we can do nothing. With you, I firmly believe, nothing is beyond our reach. We are partners in one of the most challenging and rewarding enterprises of government: working to improve the lives of America's children and families.

Let's pledge ourselves at this season of giving to work as hard as we can to assure the best of all gifts to the children and families we serve: a chance for a better life.

Best wishes for a joyful holiday season and for success–personal and professional–in the new year.□

San Diego

Continued from page 1

but none so far have lost benefits. When faced with that possibility, most, if not all, have subsequently contacted the District Attorney and provided the necessary information.

56 percent [of cases reviewed] yielded new information which resulted either in successful service or the generation of a summons and complaint.

To date, more than 19,000 cases have been reviewed through this project. Of those, 5,000 required no additional action, as they were either heading for, or were already in the process of being served. Of the remaining 14,000, 56 percent yielded new information which resulted either in successful service or the generation of a summons and complaint. Staff were able to close 11 percent of the cases. Another 11 percent remain, pending additional action, while 22 percent continue as incomplete, even though the custodial parent was cooperative.

If you would like further information about San Diego's Project Locate, contact Susan Green at (619) 515-8195.□

Susan Green is Fiscal Division Chief of San Diego (California) County's Bureau of Child Support Enforcement.

New Hire Progress

Through the end of October, 1997, 329,449 locate requests were submitted to the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS), with 4,960 matched in the National Directory of New Hires. An average of 291 calls are being received each day by the FPLS Information Line, 30 percent of which are from multistate employers. In addition, multistate employers have sent in more than 3,500 letters advising OCSE of their reporting state.□

$50 Pass-Through

Welfare reform legislation repeals the child support $50 pass-through, but states have the option of continuing it at their expense.

As of November 1, 1997, according to the best available information, twenty states have elected to continue–some on a "temporary" basis.

Kansas is continuing but at the reduced amount of $40, while Nevada will raise the pass-through to $75. The other 34 states and jurisdictions have discontinued it.

The chart below shows each state's decision on this issue.

States continuing the pass-through

Alaska *Until 6-30-98*
California
Connecticut
Delaware
Illinois
Kansas *At $40*
Massachusetts
Maine
Michigan *Temporarily*
Missouri *Temporarily*
Nebraska *Temporarily*
Nevada *At $75*
New Jersey
New Mexico *Temporarily*
New York
Oklahoma *Until 12-31-97*
Rhode Island
Texas *Temporarily*
Vermont
Virginia
Wisconsin *Continuing on time limited basis for specific groups under 1115 waiver previously granted.*

States discontinuing the pass-through

Alabama *As systems changes are completed.*
Arkansas
Arizona
Colorado
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Guam
Hawaii
Idaho
Indiana
Iowa *Discontinued for new TANF recipients after July 1, 1997. Continued for those receiving TANF assistance prior to July 1. No pass-through to Pre-July 1 former TANF clients who later return to TANF.*
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Minnesota
Mississippi
Montana
New Hampshire
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Puerto Rico
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Utah
Virgin Islands
Washington
West Virginia *Legislature has authorized a $50 incentive payment to TANF recipients who receive a child support payment.*
Wyoming .□

FYI: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

This notice of proposed rulemaking concerns quarterly wage and unemployment compensation claims reporting to the National Directory of New Hires. Section 313(b) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform) requires each State Directory of New Hires to furnish, on a quarterly basis, to the National Directory of New Hires, data concerning the wages and unemployment compensation paid to individuals. Consideration was given to comments received by December 8, 1997. For further information contact Anne Benson of OCSE's Policy Branch at (202) 401-1467.□

Building New Partnerships: Child Support and Domestic Violence

By: Neal Carter

At the Claremont, New Hampshire, District Office of Child Support (OCS), staff have developed a model to better coordinate services provided to clients of both OCS and the area Domestic Violence Supportive Services.

Not uncommonly, OCS receives court orders in cases where there is also some form of domestic violence. These orders may not specify an amount to be paid as child support. Or, the order may stipulate that child support is to be determined by OCS in accordance with state guidelines. The resulting disputes and delays can place additional financial pressure on some of the neediest clients.

To find some common ground for dealing with this problem, OCS staff arranged to meet with staff of the domestic violence agencies. One outcome was that OCS staff would provide domestic violence staff with training on how to determine the amount of child support in accordance with state guidelines.

Coordination between the two agencies has made child support staff more aware of the need to provide information on local area supportive services available to the client.

As a result, the domestic violence agencies now assist their clients and the courts in determining the guideline amount of support at the time a restraining order is issued. And they also request that these orders be payable through the IV-D agency.

The meeting also opened a channel of regular communication between the two groups. Relationships were established; regular meetings now occur to share updated policy information and increase the effectiveness of handling cases involving domestic violence.

Now, when a child support order is received as part of a domestic violence order, the case is opened for enforcement. A motion is then filed with the applicable court for a permanent order of ongoing support. Usually, because of the short period of time required to take this step, there is no change in the guideline amount of support required.

Obligors rarely contest such actions. If the parties are married, future problems regarding the amount of support need not arise, as the existing child support aspects of the order can also be incorporated into a divorce decree. (If good cause for non-cooperation is claimed, the worker, of course, assesses the case to determine whether enforcement action will be taken.)

Coordination between the two agencies has made child support staff more aware of the need to provide information on local area supportive services available to the client. In the initial interview, applicants are specifically asked if they have been involved in a domestic violence situation. If the answer is yes, they are given a card which has the local domestic violence support agency's number on it and are encouraged to call. In this way, the return of victims of domestic violence–because of financial reasons–to potentially dangerous situations may be prevented.

For more information contact Neal Carter at (603) 542-9544 X312. □

Neal Carter is a Supervisor in the Claremont, New Hampshire, District Office of Child Support.

Working With Low-Income Fathers

By: Nigel Vann

If low-income fathers receive comprehensive support services designed to help them gain employment skills and deal with parenting issues, the likelihood is that they will be more involved with their children–and more likely to pay child support.

This is the key premise of Partners for Fragile Families, a project of the National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL), which receives funding from OCSE, as well as the Ford Foundation.

To build the capacity of community based organizations, and encourage the development of partnerships between community based fatherhood programs and child support enforcement, NPCL is providing a series of one-and three-day workshops.

The one-day workshops, which are customized to meet specific needs, cover a range of awareness and capacity building issues for staff of organizations that work with fragile families–defined as low-income, never-married parents and their children. The three-day workshops are designed to broaden and strengthen the range of services available for fathers.

At a recent three-day skills building workshop in Denver, staff from community based organizations and child support enforcement officials came together to focus on strategies to help young low-income fathers play responsible, involved, nurturing roles in the lives of their children.

The training is focused on preparing participants to facilitate activities from "Fatherhood Development: A Curriculum for Young Fathers," which was co-authored in the early 1990s by Pamela Wilson, NPCL's training consultant, and Jeffery Johnson, NPCL President, for Public/Private Ventures' Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project.

Using an experiential learning approach, the curriculum addresses the real experiences and challenges of young fathers through 25 streetwise group discussion sessions that provide support, information, and motivation in personal development, parenthood, relationships, sexuality, and responsible manhood.

Participants at the Denver workshop:

- met a panel of young fathers who described the challenges they face as fathers;
- learned about best practices from the field regarding program planning, implementation, and evaluation;
- considered strategies for recruitment, retention, staffing, and funding;
- practiced group facilitation and individual counseling skills;
- focused on issues of paternity establishment and child support; and
- discussed some of the mutual benefits of partnership development for local community based organizations and child support enforcement agencies.

Community based fatherhood programs and other service providers can help child support enforcement agencies meet their goals by encouraging unwed fathers to establish paternity, helping them find and keep jobs, and providing motivation and support for them to be responsible fathers.

Child support enforcement agencies, in turn, can help fatherhood programs by: providing program referrals; identifying funding sources; and developing policies that take into account the circumstances of low-income fathers.

As a follow-up to the Denver workshop, Bob Conklin, Project Manager for the Colorado Department of Human Services' Child Support Division, is forming links with a number of local programs to explore some of these possibilities. He described the workshop as "full of good ideas for ways to work more creatively with low-income fathers and their families."

Ann Costilow, Section Chief, Office of the Attorney General's Outreach Program, Austin, Texas, described the workshop as one that "helped me to visualize programs that the Texas Child Support Division can develop to better serve the needs of unwed parents."

The Partners for Fragile Families workshop series continues in 1998 with workshops scheduled for San Francisco, St. Petersburg, Santa Fe, Indianapolis, New York, Chicago, Boston, Detroit, Los Angeles, Houston, and Washington, DC. For more information contact Nigel Vann at (202) 429-6526. □

Nigel Vann is NPCL's Director of Partnership Development.

Region V Partnership

By: Gale Quinn

What began in Region V (Chicago) as an effort to improve collaboration between child support enforcement and Head Start in Ohio may evolve into a Region-wide initiative to promote a more unified approach to the way government agencies provide services. Last summer, regional office staff met in Columbus with their Ohio counterparts to explore formation of a committee to strengthen local/state/federal collaboration.

Hosted by Barbara Saunders, Assistant Deputy Director of Ohio's Office of Child Support Enforcement, the meeting resulted in an agreement to formalize the committee and expand its membership to include representatives from the Ohio Governor's office, the Community Action Agency, Children's Support Rights, Children's and Parents' Rights, the County Directors' Association, and the State's Department of Education and Department of Human Services.

A second meeting, hosted by Barbara Haxton, the Executive Director of Ohio's Head Start Association, resulted in a draft of a formal interagency collaboration agreement. To be signed by all participants at a ceremony hosted by Region V Hub Director Linda Carson in Chicago in March, 1998, the agreement will focus on measurable action items developed by the committee (see box, below).

In coming months other Region V states (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) are expected to join with Ohio in this initiative. For more information, contact Gale Quinn at (312) 353-3314. □

Gale Quinn is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Region V, Chicago, Office.

Committee Action Items

- Jointly develop strategies to promote family economic independence and productivity;
- Jointly develop a speakers bureau to inform audiences of available resources;
- Review policy and procedural manuals to improve program interface;
- Identify technical assistance initiatives that can be addressed by the committee;
- Identify and share best practices;
- Identify barriers to enhanced program performance and strategies for eliminating them; and
- Develop an action plan which clearly identifies time frames, lead responsibilities, resource management, and technical assistance required to implement goals. □

Put Children First

Ten minutes to write public service announcements (PSAs)? It's not easy but participants at NCSEA's **Put Children First Workshop** in August proved it can be done. Participants divided into small groups to work on the **Put Children First** campaign. One group brainstormed for ten minutes and produced draft scripts for PSAs and for cable television "Banner" announcements.

Use these ideas or build on them for your own state's **Put Children First** campaign.

PSA 1 (Child's voice)

Mom and Dad, I need you both. Put me first.

(For more information about "Put Children First," call . . .)

PSA 2 (Child's voice)

What about me? Where is my family tree? Please give me my roots. (For more information . . .)

PSA 3 (Mom and Dad voices)

We may have different lives, but together we give our child(ren) the best. We put our child(ren) first.

(For more information . . .)

PSA 4 (Mom and Dad voices)

We may have different lives, but we have the same goal. We put our child(ren) first.

(For more information . . .)

PSA No. 5 (Dad's voice)

Until I began paying, I had no child. Now my child comes first. Put children first.

(For more information . . .)

The following are possible general PSAs and possible cable "Banners." (Check your local cable to see how many characters they allow for a "banner" announcement.)

- Children need love and support from both parents to have a better future. Put children first.
- Child support programs are dedicated to securing a brighter future for children. Put children first.

Good luck in getting out your state's PSAs. The countdown to 2000 is underway. Please send your public service announcements and campaign ideas to David Siegel at (202) 401-9373. □

*The **Put Children First Workshop** presenters in Phoenix were Lois Rakov of Illinois, Alicia Terry of Texas, David Siegel of OCSE, and Ernestine Jones of Maximus.*

Expansion in Health Coverage for Children

By: Nehemiah Rucker

The State Child Health Insurance Program, signed into law this past summer as part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, is expected by some to lead to the largest expansion in health care services to low-income children since creation of the Medicaid Program in 1965. The legislation provides states with $24 billion over five years to expand medical coverage to an estimated two to five million formerly uninsured children.

Because it expands the potential sources of affordable health coverage for low-income children, the State Child Health Insurance Program enhances the effectiveness of child support enforcement efforts to ensure the health coverage of children in IV-D cases. It also affords state child support enforcement agencies an opportunity to forge new partnerships with Medicaid agencies and health care providers.

Individual state allotments will be based on a formula which takes into account the number of uninsured children in each state. The program is targeted to children in working poor families whose income is too high to qualify for Medicaid but too low to afford private health insurance (see July '97 *CSR*). States were free to begin the program as early as October 1, 1997, pending submission and approval of a State Child Health Insurance Program Plan.

States are provided with considerable flexibility in restructuring current programs to handle the projected expansion. For example, they can establish eligibility criteria, determine provider reimbursement rates, choose contractors, and decide which specific health services or benefits are to be offered.

In addition, states may choose to provide these services and benefits through various options, including the establishment of a separate insurance program; offering benefits as an expansion to the current state Medicaid Program; or a combination of these two approaches, including the purchase of medical services directly from private health care providers.

For more information about this new legislation, contact Nehemiah Rucker at (202) 401-9282. □

Nehemiah Rucker is OCSE's Medical and Health Care Liaison Officer.

Law Enforcement Executives Convene

More than a hundred law enforcement executives throughout the country–including police chiefs, sheriffs, district attorneys, and federal law enforcement officials–took part this fall in a series of symposia with child support enforcement officials. The meetings were held in San Diego, California, September 24 -25, San Antonio, Texas, October 9 - 10, and Annapolis, Maryland, November 13 - 14.

OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross commended the law enforcement leadership for a willingness to engage in partnership with OCSE.

In each, a comprehensive overview of child support enforcement and the welfare reform legislation was followed by detailed discussions on how law enforcement and child support can team up to improve services to America's children and families.

Speaking to each gathering, OCSE Deputy Director David Gray Ross commended the law enforcement leadership for an emphasis on community involvement in policing (see September '97 *CSR*) and for a willingness to engage in partnership with OCSE. Noting that there are over 650,000 police officers within the United States, Judge Ross said, "If we can tap but 20 percent of those dedicated officers, think of the additional manpower that will instantly become available to child support."

As a result of these symposia, meetings are underway in Seattle between child support enforcement, the police, and district attorneys. In San Francisco, the police and sheriff's departments are moving ahead with plans to develop a formal partnership with child support. And in Sacramento, a law enforcement/child support enforcement task force is being formed to evaluate cross training initiatives, temporary duty assignments, and information sharing,.

For more information, call Chief Donald A. Deering, OCSE's Law Enforcement Liaison, at (202) 401-1063. □

**U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services**

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Child Support Report

U.S. Postal Services Computer Match

In accordance with Executive Order 12953, dated February 27, 1995, making the Federal Government a model employer, OCSE recently conducted a cross match of tax offset cases with the Postal Service (USPS) personnel files. A total of 18,134 matches were found.

The purpose of this matching program was to fulfill one of the objectives of Executive Order 12953. To establish the Executive Branch of the Federal Government as a model employer in promoting and facilitating the establishment and enforcement of child support owed by its Civilian and Uniformed Services work force, periodic matches will be conducted to identify USPS personnel who may owe delinquent child support and to enforce child support by wage withholding or other enforcement actions.

Those cases that match will be forwarded to appropriate state CSE agencies by OCSE to determine whether wage withholding or other enforcement actions should be commenced. It is expected that sharing such USPS match information with appropriate state CSE agencies will result in significant numbers of new wage withholding and other enforcement actions and in substantial increases in child support collections. ☐

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